



AN

ACCOUNT

OF THE

MUSICAL PERFORMANCES

IN

WESTMINSTER-ABBEY,

AND THE

PANTHEON,

May 26th, 27th, 29th; and June the 3d, and 5th, 1784.

IN

COMMEMORATION

OF

HANDEL.

By CHARLES BURNEY, Muſ. D. F. R. S.

——— All
The multitude of Angels, with a ſhout
Loud as from numbers without number, ſweet
As from bleſs'd voices, uttering joy, heav'n rung
With jubilee, and loud Hoſannas fill'd
Th' eternal regions. MILT. PARAD. LOST, Book III.

LONDON,
Printed for the Benefit of the MUSICAL FUND; and Sold by T. PAYNE and Son, at the Meuſe-Gate; and G. ROBINSON, Pater-noſter-Row.
MDCCLXXXV.



TO THE

KING.

GReatneſs of mind is never more willingly acknowledged, nor more ſincerely reverenced, than when it deſcends into the regions of general life, and by countenancing common purſuits, or partaking common amuſements, ſhews that it borrows nothing from diſtance or formality.

By the notice which Your Majeſty has been pleaſed to beſtow upon the celebration

of HANDEL's memory, You have condeſcended to add Your voice to public praiſe, and give Your ſanction to muſical emulation.

The delight which Muſic affords ſeems to be one of the firſt attainments of rational nature; wherever there is humanity, there is modulated ſound. The mind ſet free from the reſiſtleſs tyranny of painful want, employs its firſt leiſure upon ſome ſavage melody. Thus in thoſe lands of unprovided wretchedneſs, which Your Majeſty's encouragement of naval inveſtigation has brought lately to the knowledge of the poliſhed world, though all things elſe were wanted, every nation had its Muſic; an art of which the rudiments accompany the commencements, and the refinements adorn the completion of civility, in which the inhabitants of the earth ſeek their firſt refuge from evil,

and,

and, perhaps, may find at laſt the moſt elegant of their pleaſures.

But that this pleaſure may be truly elegant, ſcience and nature muſt aſſiſt each other; a quick ſenſibility of Melody and Harmony, is not always originally beſtowed, and thoſe who are born with this ſuſceptibility of modulated ſounds, are often ignorant of its principles, and muſt therefore be in a great degree delighted by chance; but when Your Majeſty is pleaſed to be preſent at Muſical performances, the artiſts may congratulate themſelves upon the attention of a judge in whom all requiſites concur, who hears them not merely with inſtinctive emotion, but with rational approbation, and whoſe praiſe of HANDEL is not the effuſion of credulity, but the emanation of Science.

How

DEDICATION.

How near, or how diſtant, the time may be, when the art of combining ſounds ſhall be brought to its higheſt perfection by the natives of Great Britain, this is not the place to enquire; but the efforts produced in other parts of knowledge by Your Majeſty's favour, give hopes that Muſic may make quick advances now it is recommended by the attention, and dignified by the patronage of our Sovereign.

I am,

With the moſt profound Humility,

Your MAJESTY's moſt dutiful

And devoted Subject and Servant,

CHARLES BURNEY.

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PREFACE.

A Public and national tribute of gratitude to deceaſed mortals, whoſe labours and talents have benefitted, or innocently amuſed, mankind, has, at all times, been one of the earlieſt marks of civilization in every country emerged from ignorance and barbariſm. And there ſeems no more rational ſolution of the myſteries of ancient Greek mythology, than to imagine that men, whoſe virtue and abilities ſurpaſſed the common ſtandard of human excellence, had excited that degree of veneration in poſterior times, which gave riſe to their deification and apotheoſis.

Such a gigantic idea of commemoration as the preſent, for the completion of which it was neceſſary that

ſo many minds ſhould be concentred, muſt have been long foſtering ere it took a practicable form, and was matured into reality. But from the conception of this plan to its full growth, there was ſuch a concurrence of favourable circumſtances as the records of no art or ſcience can parallel: the Royal Patronage with which it was honoured; the high rank, unanimity, and active zeal of the directors; the leiſure, as well as ardour and ſkill of the conductor; the diſintereſted docility of individuals; and liberal contributions of the public; all conſpired to render this event memorable, and worthy of a place, not only in the annals of Muſic, but of mankind.

And indeed it was hardly poſſible for a Muſical Hiſtorian not to imagine that an enterprize honoured with the patronage and preſence of their Majeſties; planned and perſonally directed by noblemen and gentlemen of the firſt rank; attended by the moſt numerous and polite audience that was ever aſſembled on a ſimilar occaſion, in any country; among whom, not only the King, Queen, Royal Family, nobility, and great officers of ſtate appeared, but the archbiſhops, biſhops, and other dignified clergy, with the heads of the law,

would

would form an æra in Muſic, as honourable to the art and to national gratitude, as to the great artiſt himſelf who has given occaſion to the Feſtival.

HANDEL, whoſe genius and abilities have lately been ſo nobly commemorated, though not a native of England, ſpent the greateſt part of his life in the ſervice of its inhabitants: improving our taſte, delighting us in the church, the theatre, and the chamber; and introducing among us ſo many ſpecies of muſical excellence, that, during more than half a century, while ſentiment, not faſhion, guided our applauſe, we neither wanted nor wiſhed for any other ſtandard. He arrived among us at a barbarous period for almoſt every kind of muſic, except that of the church. But, beſides his oratorio choruſes, which are ſo well intitled to immortality, his organ-pieces, and manner of playing, are ſtill ſuch models of perfection as no maſter in Europe has ſurpaſſed; and his operas were compoſed in a ſtyle ſo new and excellent, that no Muſic has ſince, with all its refinements of melody and ſymmetry of air, in performance, had ſuch effects on the audience.

Indeed his works were ſo long the models of perfection in this country, that they may be ſaid to have

formed our national taſte. For though many in the capital have been partial, of late years, to the compoſitions of Italy, Germany, and France; yet the nation at large has rather tolerated than adopted theſe novelties.

The Engliſh, a manly, military race, were inſtantly captivated by the grave, bold, and nervous ſtyle of Handel, which is congenial with their manners and ſentiments. And though the productions of men of great genius and abilities have, ſince his time, had a tranſient ſhare of attention and favour; yet, whenever any of the works of Handel are revived by a performer of ſuperior talents, they are always heard with a degree of general ſatisfaction and delight, which other compoſitions ſeldom obtain. Indeed, the exquiſite manner in which his productions are executed at the concert eſtabliſhed for the preſervation and performance of old maſters, ſtimulates a deſire in all who hear them to have a more general acquaintance with his works. And it was, perhaps, at the late performance in Weſtminſter Abbey, that the compoſitions of this great maſter were firſt ſupplied with a band, capable of diſplaying all the wonderful powers of his harmony.

Pope,

Pope, more than forty years ago, imagining that his band was more numerous than modern times had ever ſeen or heard before, contented himſelf with calling him *Centimanus*, where he ſays:

> Strong in new arms, lo! Giant HANDEL ſtands,
> Like bold Briareus with his *hundred hands*.

But if our great bard had ſurvived the late Commemoration, when the productions of Handel employed more than five hundred voices and inſtruments, he would, perhaps, have loſt a pun, a ſimile, and a *bon mot*, for want of a claſſical alluſion to lean on.

Notwithſtanding the frequent complaints that are made of the corruption of Muſic, of public caprice, and private innovation, there is, perhaps, no country in Europe, where the productions of old maſters are more effectually preſerved from oblivion, than in England: for, amidſt the love of novelty and rapid revolutions of faſhion, in common with other countries, our cathedrals continue to perform the ſervices and full anthems of the 16th and 17th centuries, by Tye, Tallis, Bird, Morley, Gibbons, Humphrey, Blow, and Purcell; as well as thoſe produced at the beginning of the preſent

ſent century, by Wiſe, Clarke, Crofts, and others, whoſe grave and learned compoſitions have contributed to keep harmony, and the ancient choral ſtyle, from corruption and decay. The Crown and Anchor Concert, eſtabliſhed in 1710, for the preſervation of old maſters of every country, has long endeavoured to check innovation; and the annual performances at St. Paul's, for the benefit of the Sons of the Clergy; the Madrigal Society, as well as the Catch-Club, and Concert of Ancient Muſic, are all more peculiarly favourable to the works of the illuſtrious dead, than thoſe of living candidates for fame.

But the moſt honourable eulogium that can be beſtowed on the power of Muſic is, that whenever the human heart is wiſhed to expand in charity and beneficence, its aid is more frequently called in, than that of any other art or advocate: as the delight it affords in exchange for ſuperfluous wealth, is not only the moſt exquiſite which the wit of man can ſupply, but the moſt innocent that a well-governed ſtate can allow.

Indeed Handel's Church-Muſic has been kept alive, and has ſupported life in thouſands, by its performance for charitable purpoſes: as at St. Paul's for the Sons of

the

the Clergy; at the Triennial Meetings of the Three Choirs of Worceſter, Hereford, and Glouceſter; at the two Univerſities of Oxford and Cambridge; at the Benefit Concerts for decayed Muſicians and their Families; at the Foundling-Hoſpital; at St. Margaret's Church for the Weſtminſter Infirmary; and for Hoſpitals and Infirmaries in general, throughout the kingdom, which have long been indebted to the art of Muſic, and to Handel's Works in particular, for their ſupport.

This will not only account for the zeal of individuals in propagating his fame, but alacrity of the nation at large, in ſupporting an enterprize calculated to do honour to the memory of ſo great an artiſt, and extenſive a benefactor.

From all the information with which my muſical reading and inquiries have furniſhed me, it ſeems not too much to ſay, that the muſicians aſſembled on this occaſion exceeded in abilities, as well as number, thoſe of every band that has been collected in modern times: as may be reaſonably inferred from the following chronological liſt of the moſt remarkable muſical muſters upon record.

At

At an interview between Francis I. king of France, and Pope Leo X. in 1515, at Bologna in Italy, the muſicians and ſingers of the French king and the Roman pontiff meeting together, formed the moſt numerous band which had ever been incorporated in thoſe times. The number, however, is not mentioned; but as the chapel and court eſtabliſhment of thoſe princes could never, when united, form a body of muſicians ſufficiently conſiderable to be put in competition with that lately aſſembled, the number may ſtill remain indefinite, without leaving the leaſt doubt of its ſuperiority.

On the ceſſation of the plague at Rome, in the early part of the laſt century, a maſs compoſed by Benevoli, for ſix choirs, of four parts each, was performed in St. Peter's church, of which he was maeſtro di capella; and the ſingers, amounting to *more than two hundred*, were arranged in different circles of the dome: the ſixth choir occupying the ſummit of the cupola. On both theſe occaſions no inſtruments ſeem to have been employed, but the organ.

We

We are told in Bonnet's *Hiſt. de la Muſique (a)*, that the *Te Deum*, which Lulli had compoſed for the recovery of Lewis XIV. in 1686, was afterwards performed at Paris, on the recovery of his eldeſt ſon, Monſeigneur, by *three hundred muſicians.*

In the year 1723, moſt of the great muſicians of Europe were aſſembled together in the city of Prague, by order of the emperor Charles VI. to celebrate the feſtival of his being crowned king of Bohemia. Hiſtory, ſays Quantz (the late celebrated performer on the German flute, and maſter of the preſent king of Pruſſia), does not furniſh a more glorious event for muſic, than this ſolemnity; nor a ſimilar inſtance of ſo great a number of eminent profeſſors, of any one art, being collected together. Upon this occaſion, there was an opera performed in the open air, by *a hundred voices*, and *two hundred inſtruments (b)*.

A ſolemn ſervice was performed at the funeral of Rameau, 1767, at the church of the Oratory, in Paris, by all the muſicians of the king's band, and by thoſe of

(a) Tom. II. p. 93. Publiſhed by Marpurg at Berlin, 1754.
(b) *Herrn Johann Joachim Quantzens Lebenſlauf, von ihm ſelbſt entworfen.* See likewiſe *Muſical Tour*, vol. ii. p. 177.

the Royal Academy of Muſic, united. On this occaſion, we are told *(a)*, that many pieces from Rameau's beſt productions were ſelected, which drew tears from ſeveral that were preſent, by the excellence of the muſic, and the melancholy occaſion on which it was performed.

At *Santa Chiara*, in Naples, about the ſame time, according to Signor Corri, who was then in that city ſtudying under the famous Porpora, near *three hundred muſicians* were employed at the laſt conſecration of a nun of great diſtinction.

And at the public funeral of Jomelli, in the ſame city, 1774, a like number was aſſembled together, in order to pay their laſt duty to that great maſter; and theſe not only performed *gratis*, but contributed to the neceſſary expences of this ſolemn ſervice *(b)*.

At many other *gran funzioni* and feſtivals in Rome, Venice, and other parts of Italy, a congreſs of *two or three hundred muſicians* is not, perhaps, very uncommon; but from the time that the preſent ſyſtem of harmony was invented, to this period, no well-authen-

(a) Eſſai ſur la Muſ. tom. III. p. 465. *di Saverio Mattei.* In Napoli, 1774.
(b) Saggio di Poeſie Latine ed Italiane

ticated

ticated inſtance, I believe, could be produced, of *five hundred* performers, vocal and inſtrumental, being conſolidated into one body, and giving ſuch indiſputable proofs of talents and diſcipline, as on the late occaſion.

Indeed the fortunate arrival of Madame Mara in this country, while the manner of celebrating the intended feſtival was in contemplation, eaſed the directors and conductor of much anxiety and difficulty, as to the diſtribution of the Songs. There were, at this time, but few great ſingers in London who ſtood high in the favour of the public; and thoſe were either inacceſſible, or apprehenſive that a ſingle voice, of whatever volume, would be inaudible, in ſuch an immenſe building as Weſtminſter-Abbey. The voluntary offer therefore of this admirable ſinger to perform at each exhibition, and the liberty granted by the managers of the Pantheon, to whom ſhe was excluſively engaged, gave birth to hopes from ſingle ſongs, which were greatly ſurpaſſed, in effect, on the day of performance. Indeed, the moſt ſanguine promoters of this enterprize, muſt at firſt have imagined, that the chief difference and ſuperiority of theſe performances to all others,

would have ariſen from the aggregate of ſounds produced by ſo immenſe a band, in the choruſes. But the effects were not rendered more new, grand, and ſurpriſing, by the united force of the whole, than ſweet, diſtinct, and audible, by the ſingle efforts of individuals. The knowledge, experience, and abilities of the two alternate leaders of this Muſical Legion, Meſſ. Hay and Cramer, were never more manifeſt, nor were their orders ever more implicitly obeyed, than on this great and trying occaſion.

Indeed, the effects of this amazing band, not only overſet all the predictions of ignorance and ſarcaſm, but the conjectures of theory and experience. By ſome it was predicted, that an orcheſtra ſo numerous could never be *in tune*; but even *tuning*, to ſo noble an organ, was, for once, grand, and productive of pleaſing ſenſations. By ſome it was thought that, from their number and diſtance, they would never play *in time*; which, however, they did moſt accurately, and without the meaſure being beat in the uſual clumſy manner. By others it was expected that the band would be ſo *loud*, that whoever heard this performance, would never hear again; however, the ſound of theſe multiplied tones

arrived

arrived as mild and benign at the ears of the audience, as they could from the feeble efforts of a few violins, in a common concert-room. And, laſtly, that from the immenſe ſize of the building, no *ſingle voice* had the leaſt chance of being heard by thoſe who had places remote from the orcheſtra; but, luckily, this was ſo far from being true, that not a vocal breathing, however feeble by nature, or ſoftened by art, was inaudible in any part of the immenſe ſpace through which it diffuſed itſelf in all directions.

All theſe difficulties, real and imaginary, were happily obviated by Mr. Commiſſioner Bates, the CONDUCTOR of this great enterprize; for this gentleman, who had ſo long made the various works of ſo great and fertile a genius his particular ſtudy, ſelected the pieces, collected, collated, and corrected the books; and, with a diligence and zeal, which nothing but enthuſiaſm could inſpire, after the idea was ſuggeſted, totally devoted every moment of his leiſure to its advancement and completion.

There have been commentators who have dedicated their whole lives to the ſtudy of one author: Homer, Ariſtotle, and Shakſpeare, have had votaries of this kind

kind; and when admiration and zeal are moderated and tempered by rectitude of judgment, thoſe who, during a long ſeries of years, have chiefly pointed their attention to a particular ſtyle of muſical compoſition, muſt be beſt acquainted with its beauties, and able to direct others how to execute it with energy and preciſion.

No muſical *amateur* had perhaps ever ſuch experience in theſe matters, or ſuch frequent opportunities of combining and diſpoſing a numerous band to the beſt advantage, as Mr. Bates; who, while he was purſuing the ſtudy of literature and ſcience at King's-College, Cambridge, had the reputation not only of being the beſt gentleman-performer on the harpſichord and organ of that time, but had the chief direction of the concerts and choral performances in that univerſity; as he had afterwards at Hinchinbroke, where the earl of Sandwich frequently regaled his neighbours and friends with Oratorios, executed with the utmoſt preciſion, by performers of the firſt claſs. After the eſtabliſhment of that moſt reſpectable inſtitution, the Concert of Ancient Muſic, in 1776, of which Mr. Bates digeſted the plan, he was long the ſole conductor

ductor of the performances at theſe meetings, ſo juſtly celebrated, not only for accuracy and preciſion, but for the new effects produced from ſuch old and venerable productions of great maſters of harmony, as would otherwiſe have been buried in oblivion, or ſwept away from public notice by the rage for novelty, and tide of faſhion.

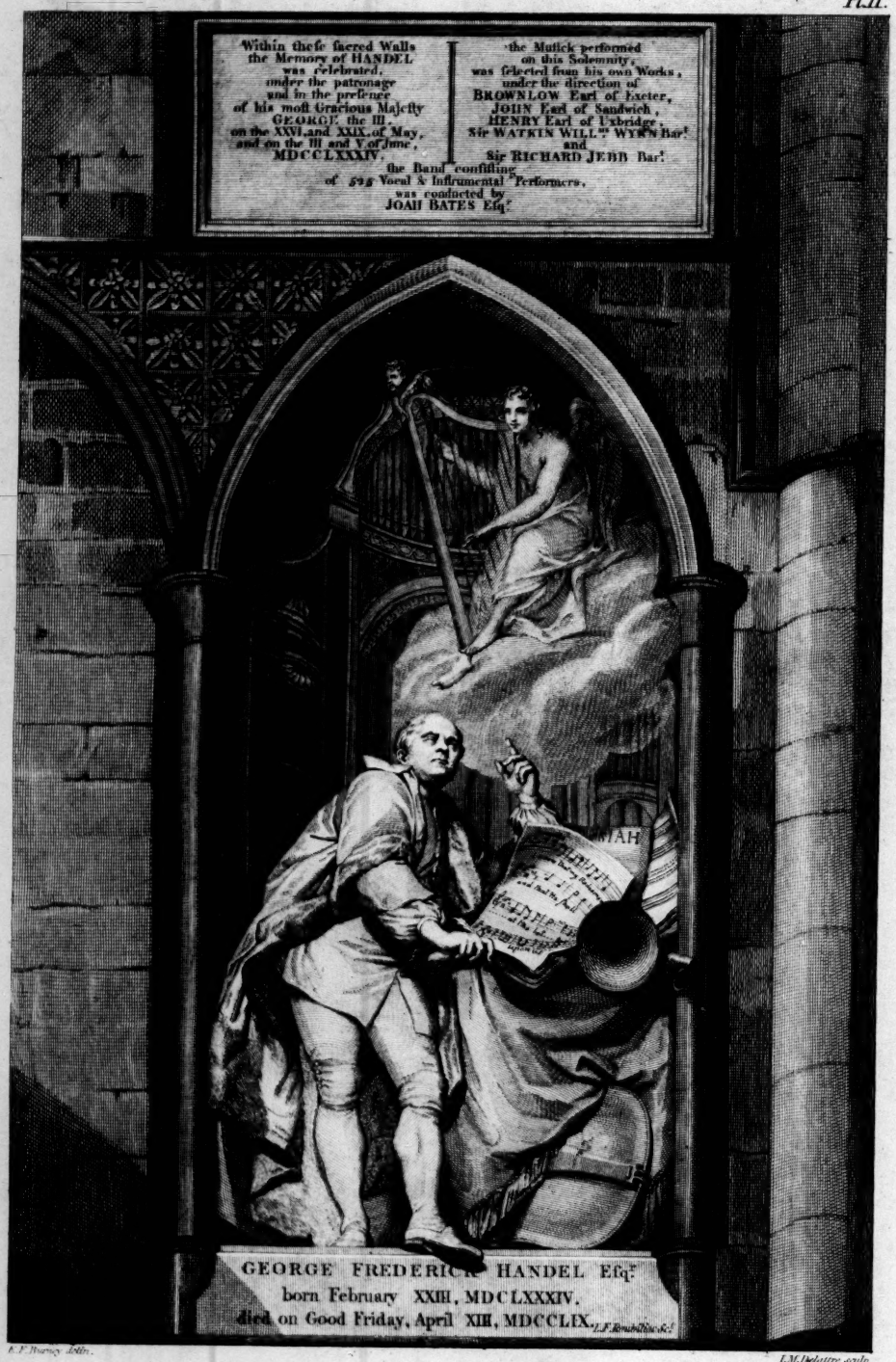
However my mind may be impreſſed with a reverence for HANDEL, by an early and long acquaintance with his perſon and works, yet, as it amounts not to bigotry, or the preclusion of all reſpect or admiration of excellence in others, wherever I can find it, my narrative will be leſs likely to excite ſuſpicions of improbability, or hyperbole, in ſuch readers as were not ſo fortunate as to participate of the ſurprize and rapture of all that were preſent at theſe magnificent performances, and are able to judge of the reality of the ſenſations deſcribed.

As ſuch uncommon attention has lately been beſtowed on the *works* of HANDEL, it ſeems natural to imagine, that the ſame public which has intereſted itſelf ſo deeply in their performance, will be curious about every thing that concerns the *perſon* of ſo renowned

nowned a compoſer. I ſhall therefore prefix to the following account, a *Sketch of his Life*, drawn from ſuch narrations as have been publiſhed in England and Germany, as well as from the recollection of what paſſed within my own memory and knowledge. And though I reſerve the critical examination of the entire works of HANDEL for the laſt volume of my Hiſtory, yet, as indiſcriminate praiſe is little better than cenſure, I ſhall ſpecify ſuch beauties of compoſition and effect as I felt moſt forcibly in attending the performance of each day, and for which, by a careful peruſal of the ſcore, I have been ſince enabled to aſſign reaſons.

After ſo long a Preface to ſo ſhort a book, I ſhall add nothing more, in apology for my narrative, than that I was ſtimulated to the drawing it up, thus haſtily, by the extreme ſatisfaction I felt in finding that the late COMMEMORATION was not only an undertaking of ſuch magnitude as to merit the patronage of an enlightened public; but that the public, by its liberal ſupport and profound attention, manifeſted itſelf to be worthy of the undertaking.

SKETCH



View of HANDEL'S. *Monument in Westminster Abbey.*

Published January 14th 1785.



in Westminster Abbey.

Published January 14th 1785.

SKETCH

OF THE

LIFE

OF

HANDEL.

IT is by ſuch minute degrees that men arrive at that point of eminence which intereſts the public, and awakens general curioſity, that the beginnings of greatneſs paſs unobſerved, till they can no longer be diſtinctly ſeen through the blaze of meridian brightneſs. Thus the early events of an illuſtrious character are generally as obſcure and fabulous, as the firſt years of an ancient and powerful empire. For Biographers, notwithſtanding the title they aſſume, ſeldom draw from the life; nor, till an illuſtrious perſonage has been ſome time deceaſed, do enquiry and conjecture begin to buſy themſelves in tracing incidents, deſcribing ſituations, and delineating characters. And hence, by procraſtination, the whole becomes little better than a mere *fancy-piece*.

If it were poſſible, however, to know, in detail, the youthful exploits of an Alexander, or a Cæſar; the firſt poetical effuſions of a Homer, or a Virgil; the dawnings of reaſon in a Newton, or a Locke; or the primary fermentations and expanſions of genius in a HANDEL, they would afford great gratification to human curioſity, which delights in ſeeing by what minute gradations, or gigantic ſtrides, men gifted with uncommon powers, begin their journey to the Temple of Fame.

The *Memoirs of the Life of* HANDEL, publiſhed in 1760, the year after his deceaſe, though written with zeal and candour, are neither ſufficiently ample nor accurate to enable us to aſcertain with preciſion the places of his reſidence, dates of his productions, or events of his early years, previous to his firſt arrival in England, in 1710, at the age of Twenty-ſix.

It is however generally agreed, that the great muſician, GEORGE FREDERICK HANDEL, was born at Halle, in the Duchy of Magdebourg, and Circle of Lower Saxony, the 24th of February, 1684; that his father was an eminent ſurgeon and phyſician of the ſame place, and upwards of ſixty years of age when this ſon, the iſſue of a ſecond marriage, was born; and that, in his early childhood, he diſcovered ſuch a paſſion for Muſic as could not be ſubdued by the commands of his father, who intended him for the profeſſion of the law.

He had made a conſiderable progreſs in this art, by ſtealth, before he was allowed a maſter; but at ſeven years old, his father finding it impoſſible to fix his attention to any thing but Muſic, for which he ſeemed to have been endowed by nature with very uncommon propenſities and faculties, he placed him under Zachau, organiſt of the cathedral church of Halle; a man of conſiderable

ſiderable abilities in his profeſſion, and proud of his pupil. By the time he was nine years old, our young Muſician was not only able to officiate on the organ for his maſter, but began to ſtudy compoſition; and at this early period of his life he is ſaid to have compoſed a Service, or, as it is called in Germany, a *ſpiritual Cantata*, every week, for voices and inſtruments, during three years ſucceſſively. The late Mr. Weideman was in poſſeſſion of a ſet of Sonatas, in three parts, which HANDEL compoſed when he was only ten years old *(a)*.

He ſeems to have continued to ſtudy under his firſt maſter Zachau, in his native city, till the year 1698; when, being arrived at the age of fourteen, he was carried to Berlin, where operas were in a very flouriſhing ſtate, at the court of the Elector of Brandenburg, afterwards King of Pruſſia, who had then in his ſervice not only many ſingers of eminence from Italy, but Bononcini and Attilio, to compoſe. HANDEL is ſaid to have diſtinguiſhed himſelf in this city as a wonderful performer, for his early years, and to have given birth to ſuch expectations of his future greatneſs, that his Electoral Highneſs offered to take him into his ſervice, and ſend him to Italy, for the completion of his Muſical ſtudies; but his father declining this honour, from a ſpirit of independence, it was determined that he ſhould return to Halle, where he muſt have continued a conſiderable

(a) The earl of Marchmont, in his travels through Germany, when Lord Polwarth, picked them up as great curioſities, and gave them to Mr. Weideman, of whom he took leſſons on the German flute. A friend, who favoured me with this anecdote, procured a copy of theſe juvenile productions, which are now in his Majeſty's collection, and which Weideman ſhewed to HANDEL; who ſeemed to look at them with much pleaſure, and laughing, ſaid, "I uſed to write like the D——l in thoſe days, but chiefly for the hautbois, which was my favourite inſtrument." This, and the having ſuch an exquiſite performer to write for, as San Martini, accounts for the frequent opportunities which HANDEL took of compoſing for that inſtrument, in the early part of his life.

time; though we are told that his father's death happening ſoon after his return from Berlin, HANDEL, not being able to ſupport the expence of a journey to Italy, whither he was ambitious of going, removed to Hamburgh, in order, by his muſical talents, to procure a ſubſiſtence: this city, next to Berlin, being then the moſt renowned for its operas. We loſe ſight, however, in all the accounts of his life hitherto publiſhed, both of our young Muſician and his improvements from the time of his quitting Berlin, till his arrival at Hamburgh, a period of five years; for, according to his rival Mattheſon, he did not viſit that city till the year 1703, at the age of nineteen.

Yet the celebrated *Telemann*, one of the greateſt German Muſicians of his time, in a well-written account of his own life and works, drawn up by himſelf at the requeſt of Mattheſon, in the year 1740, furniſhes two or three incidents concerning HANDEL, which intervened between the time of his quitting Berlin and arrival at Hamburgh, that will help to throw a little light on this dark period of his hiſtory.

Telemann, born at Magdeburgh 1681 *(a)*, like HANDEL, diſcovered an early paſſion for Muſic, and, while he was at ſchool, had, like him, made a great progreſs in the art, contrary to the inclination of his friends; but though he played on almoſt every kind of inſtrument, and had attempted to compoſe an opera at twelve years old, yet, in obedience to his mother's poſitive commands, on whom, as his father was dead, he was ſolely dependent, at about the age of twenty he ſolemnly renounced his muſical purſuits, though with the greateſt reluctance, and ſet out for Leipſic, in order to ſtudy the law in that univerſity. In the way thither,

(a) See *Germ. Tour*, vol. ii. p. 242.

how-

however, he ſtopt at *Halle*, where, ſays Telemann, " from my " acquaintance with HANDEL, who was *already famous*, I again " ſucked in ſo much of the poiſon of muſic as nearly overſet all " my reſolutions."

HANDEL was now but ſixteen years of age; and as Telemann, in his account of himſelf and his ſtudies, ſoon mentions our juvenile Muſician again, I ſhall proceed a little further in his narrative.

" However," continues Telemann, " after quitting HANDEL, " I perſevered in the plan preſcribed by my mother, and went to " Leipſic to purſue my ſtudies; but, unfortunately, was lodged " in a houſe where I perpetually heard Muſic of all kinds, which, " though much worſe than my own, again led me into tempta- " tion. And a fellow-ſtudent finding among my papers a pſalm " which I had ſet to muſic, and which, in ſacrificing all my other " illicit attempts at compoſition, had chanced to eſcape oblivion, " he begged it of me, and had it performed at St. Thomas's " church, where it was ſo much approved, that the burgomaſter " deſired I would compoſe ſomething of this kind every fort- " night; for this I was amply rewarded, and had hopes, like- " wiſe, given me, of future advantages of much greater import- " tance. At this time I happened to be reminded of the ſolemn " promiſe I had made my mother, for whom I had a great reve- " rence, of utterly abandoning all thoughts of Muſic, by receiv- " ing from her a draught for my ſubſiſtence: which, however, " I returned; and, after mentioning the profitable and promiſing " ſtate of my affairs, earneſtly intreated her to relax a little in the " rigour of her injunctions, concerning the ſtudy of Muſic. Her " bleſſings on my new labours, followed; and now I was half a " muſician again.

" Soon

" Soon after I was appointed director of the opera, for which " I compoſed many dramas, not only for Leipſic, where I eſta- " bliſhed the College of Muſic which ſtill ſubſiſts, but for So- " rau, Frankfort, and the court of Weiſſenfels. The organ of the " new church was then juſt built, of which I was appointed or- " ganiſt and director of the Muſic. This organ, however, I only " played at the conſecration, or opening, and afterwards reſigned " it, as a bone of contention for young muſical ſtudents to quarrel " and ſcramble for. At this time the pen of the excellent Kuh- " nau ſerved me for a model in fugue and counterpoint; but in " faſhioning ſubjects of melody, HANDEL *and I were continually* " *exerciſing our fancy, and reciprocally communicating our thoughts,* " *both by letter and converſation, in the frequent viſits we made to* " *each other (a)*".

According to Telemann's dates, all this muſt have happened between the year 1701 and 1703, when HANDEL, quitting Halle, arrived at Hamburgh, a place too diſtant from Leipſic for frequent viſits between theſe young Muſicians to have been practicable *(b)*.

It is ſo difficult to obtain authentic intelligence concerning the tranſactions of individuals, in remote parts of the world; that, finding how ſeldom foreigners ſpeak accurately of what happens in our own country, when we ſpeak of theirs, I cannot help ſuſpect- ing myſelf, as well as others, of ſimilar ignorance and inaccuracy.

In the accounts of our Theatres, by Riccoboni; of our Poets by Quadrio; and of our Muſic by Mattheſon, and others, the information is ſo ſcanty and erroneous, that nothing can be more contemptible than the ſituation into which we are placed in the eyes of our neighbours by theſe accounts, unleſs it be the authors

(*a*) Mattheſon's Ehren Pforte, p. 354. 1740.

(*b*) Leipſic, which is only 24 Engliſh miles from Halle, is 200 from Hamburgh.

them-

themſelves, in the opinion of thoſe who are able to detect their miſtakes.

The difficulty of eradicating error when it has once gained admiſſion into books, has been long obſerved; as it is much more eaſy to take facts for granted and implicitly tranſcribe, than to examine and confute them.

HANDEL having paſſed his youth on the continent, and chiefly in Germany, the incidents of that part of his life muſt have been better known by his cotemporary countrymen than by an inhabitant of England, who, at the diſtance of fifty years from the arrival of this great Muſician among us, depended on tradition for facts.

John Mattheſon, an able Muſician and voluminous writer on the ſubject of Muſic, who reſided at Hamburgh during the whole time that HANDEL remained in that city, has many particulars diſperſed through his writings, which merit attention. For though he ſometimes appears as a friend, companion, and admirer of HANDEL's genius and abilities, and at others aſſumes the critic, diſcovering manifeſt ſigns of rivalry, envy, and diſcontent, at his ſuperior ſucceſs; yet, Mattheſon was never ſo abandoned a writer as to invent or diſguiſe facts, which he knew the whole city of Hamburgh, and even HANDEL himſelf, who was living till within five years of this author's death, could confute *(a)*.

(*a*) When I firſt began this *Sketch*, ſeveral of Mattheſon's Muſical Tracts in my poſſeſſion having been miſlaid, I was unable to conſult them; but being ſince found, reſpect for my readers, and for truth, have induced me to cancel ſeveral leaves that were already printed, and to new write this part of HANDEL's Life, in order not only to correct the miſtakes into which I had been led by truſting to his former Engliſh Biographer, but to inſert from German writers ſuch other incidents as concern HANDEL's younger years, of which, as we know but little in England, the admirers of this venerable maſter will be more particularly curious.

MAT-

MATTHESON, born at Hamburgh 1681, had a liberal education, and became a conſiderable perſonage in that city; where, in the younger part of his life, he figured in the triple capacity of compoſer, opera-ſinger, and harpſichord-player: and afterwards, though he quitted the ſtage upon being appointed ſecretary to Sir Cyril Wych, the Engliſh reſident, yet he continued to ſtudy, practiſe, and write on Muſical ſubjects, till the time of his death.

He diſcovered as early a propenſity to Muſic as Telemann or HANDEL: having been able at nine years old to ſing his own compoſitions to the organ, in one of the Hamburgh churches; and, at eighteen, he ſet an opera called the *Pleiades*, for the theatre in that city, in which he ſung the principal part himſelf.

Indeed, Mattheſon's early connexion and intercourſe there with HANDEL, before his name as a great Muſician had penetrated into other parts of Europe, were ſuch, that it is hopeleſs now to ſeek for better information than his writings furniſh, concerning ſo intereſting a period.

Mattheſon was a vain and pompous man, whoſe firſt wiſh in all his writings was to impreſs the reader with due reverence for his own abilities and importance *(a)*. It was his boaſt before his death, in 1764, at the age of eighty-three, 'that he had printed 'as many books, on the ſubject of Muſic, as he had lived years; 'and that he ſhould leave to his executors an equal number, in 'manuſcript for the uſe of poſterity.

'In 1761, he publiſhed a Tranſlation of the Life of HANDEL, 'from the Engliſh; with additions and remarks, which are nei-'ther very candid nor liberal. But how ſhould the author of that

(a) In this he ſeems to have ſucceeded with his countrymen, as ſeveral theoretical books are dedicated to him: and Mr. Marpurg's *Treatiſe on Thorough-Baſe*, among the reſt. Handuch bey dem Generalbaſſe und der Compoſition. Berlin, 1762.

'book

' book expect quarter from him, in which it is aſſerted, that " Mat-
" theſon was no great ſinger, and only employed occaſionally." In
' refutation of which he aſſures us, " that he conſtantly ſung the
" principal parts in the Hamburgh operas, during fifteen years,
" and with ſuch ſucceſs, that he could command the paſſions of
" his audience, by exciting in them, at his pleaſure, joy, grief,
" hope, and fear." And who ſhall venture to doubt of his
' having poſſeſſed theſe powers, when their effects are thus at-
' teſted *by himſelf (a)* ?'

In a work of Muſical biography and criticiſm, by Mattheſon, called **Grundlage einer Ehren-Pforte**, *Foundation of a triumphal Arch*, in honour of Muſic and Muſicians, publiſhed at Hamburgh, 1740, in which there is a long and inflated account of himſelf and his works, which occupies thirty pages, we have, as well as in his annotations on the Engliſh Life, a more ample and ſatisfactory account of HANDEL's juvenile compoſitions and adventures, than I have been able to find elſewhere.

After telling us that he arrived at Hamburgh in the ſummer of 1703, rich in genius and good diſpoſition: " Here," ſays Mattheſon, " almoſt his firſt acquaintance was myſelf; as I met with
" him at the organ of St. Mary Magdalen's church, July the
" 30th, whence I conducted him to my father's houſe, where he
" was treated with all poſſible kindneſs as well as hoſpitality; and
" I afterwards not only attended him to organs, choirs, operas,
" and concerts, but recommended him to ſeveral ſcholars, par-
" ticularly to one in a certain houſe, where every body was
" much devoted to Muſic *(b)*.

(*a*) *Journal of a Muſical Tour through Germany*, &c. vol ii.

(*b*) This appears, in another of Mattheſon's works, to have been the houſe of the Engliſh reſident, where it ſeems as if he had ſupplanted HANDEL before his departure from Hamburgh, by being appointed, not only *Secretaire de Legation*, and Governor to the Reſident's ſon, but his Muſic-maſter.

" At firſt he only played a *ripieno* violin in the opera orcheſtra, " and behaved as if he could not count five; being naturally in- " clined to dry humour *(a)*.

" At this time he compoſed extreme long Airs and Cantatas " without end; of which, though the harmony was excellent, " yet true taſte was wanting; which, however, he very ſoon " acquired by his attendance at the opera."

As theſe young Muſicians lived much together in great intimacy, they had frequent amicable conteſts and trials of ſkill with each other; in which it appearing that they excelled on different inſtruments, HANDEL on the organ, and Mattheſon on the harpſichord, they mutually agreed not to invade each other's province, and faithfully obſerved this compact for five or ſix years.

Mattheſon tells us, that in the year 1704, the opera-houſe at Hamburgh happening to be ſhut, leaving HANDEL behind him, he travelled to Holland, played on the famous organs, and heard the great performers in that country; made concerts at Amſterdam, and might have been elected organiſt of Haerlem: having had an offer of that place, with a ſalary of fifteen hundred Dutch goldens, equal to near a hundred and fifty pounds ſterling a year. He had then thoughts of going to England, but was prevented from executing that deſign, or of accepting the place of organiſt at Haerlem, by the preſſing intreaties he received from the managers of the opera, his family, friends, and confeſſor; but chiefly by a moſt kind and obliging letter which was written to him by HANDEL, from Hamburgh. This letter in order to ſhew the kind of intimacy

(a) " I know," ſays Mattheſon, " if " he happens to read this, he will laugh in " his heart, for he never laughed outward- " ly; particularly if he remembers the poul- " terer who travelled with us; the paſtry- " cook's ſon who blew the bellows for us at " St. Mary's; our parties on the water to- " gether; and a hundred other circum- " ſtances, ſtill freſh in my mind."

which

which then ſubſiſted between them, Mattheſon has inſerted in his *Triumphal Arch.* It is dated March 18, and was written before claſhing intereſts and rival claims had occaſioned any interruption to their friendſhip; among other expreſſions of civility from HANDEL, he gives the following.

" I often wiſh to enjoy your very agreeable converſation, which " I hope will ſoon happen, as the time approaches, when, without " your preſence, nothing can be done at the opera. I moſt hum- " bly intreat you to inform me of your departure from Amſter- " dam, that I may have an opportunity of ſhewing my regard, by " giving you the meeting."

HANDEL, at this time, muſt have been compoſing his firſt Opera, in which, depending upon Mattheſon to perform the principal man's part, he had, probably, ſet the ſongs to his ſtyle of ſinging and compaſs of voice; but vanity never ſuffered Mattheſon to aſcribe HANDEL's attentions to any thing but pure love and kindneſs.

In his remarks on the Engliſh Life of HANDEL, he is particularly ſevere on that part of it which contains an account of the quarrel which happened between him and that compoſer, ſoon after the letter was written: accuſing the Biographer not only of violating geography, chronology, and hiſtory, but of a wilful miſrepreſentation of facts, in relating the circumſtances of this breach between them.

Mattheſon, who, with all his ſelf-complaiſance and pedantry, is generally allowed to have been diligent in finding, and exact in ſtating facts, after telling us that HANDEL, when he firſt came to Hamburgh, notwithſtanding the exalted ſtation at which he ſoon arrived, had no better part aſſigned him in the opera, than the

Second ripieno Violin (a); informs us, that "though he then pre-
"tended to know nothing, yet he uſed to be very arch, for he
"had always a dry way of making the graveſt people laugh, with-
"out laughing himſelf. But his ſuperior abilities were ſoon diſ-
"covered, when, upon occaſion of the harpſichord-player at
"the opera being abſent, he was firſt perſuaded to take his
"place; for he then ſhewed himſelf to be a great maſter, to the
"aſtoniſhment of every one, except myſelf, who had frequently
"heard him before, upon keyed-inſtruments."

According to Mattheſon's own confeſſion, he acquired from HANDEL, by frequently meeting him at his father's houſe, and practiſing with him, a knowledge of modulation, and method of combining ſounds, which he could have learned of no one elſe.

Upon a vacancy in an organiſt's place at Lubec, they travelled thither together, and in the *wagen* compoſed ſeveral double *fugues, da mente*, ſays Mattheſon, not *da penna*. Buxtehude was then at Lubec, and an admirable organ-player; however, HANDEL's powers on that inſtrument aſtoniſhed even thoſe who were accuſtomed to hear that great performer. HANDEL and Mattheſon were prevented from becoming candidates for the place of organiſt at Lubec, by a condition that was annexed to the obtaining that office; which was no other than to take with it, a wife, whom their conſtituents were to nominate; but thinking this too great an honour, they precipitately retreated to Hamburgh.

About this time an opera, called *Cleopatra*, compoſed by Mattheſon, was performed on that ſtage, in which he acted the part of Anthony himſelf, and HANDEL played the harpſichord; but Mat-

(a) "To how minute an origin we owe
"Young Ammon, Cæſar, and the great Naſſau!"

theſon

theſon being accuſtomed, upon the death of Anthony, which happens early in the piece, to take the harpſichord, in the character of compoſer, HANDEL refuſed to indulge his vanity, by relinquiſhing to him this poſt; which occaſioned ſo violent a quarrel between them, that at going out of the houſe, Mattheſon gave him a ſlap on the face; upon which, both immediately drew their ſwords, and a duel enſued in the Market-place, before the door of the Opera-houſe: luckily, the ſword of Mattheſon was broke againſt a metal button upon HANDEL's coat, which put an end to the combat, and they were ſoon after reconciled.

Such is the account, which, long before the death of HANDEL, Mattheſon himſelf publiſhed, concerning the difference that happened between them, during his reſidence at Hamburgh.

The Engliſh biographer is very roughly handled by Mattheſon for ſaying, that this duel had "more the appearance of *aſſaſſina-* "*tion* than of a *rencounter*," and accuſes him of conſtantly and wilfully diminiſhing the age of HANDEL, in order to repreſent him not only as a prodigy in Muſic, but a youth of too tender years to be poſſeſſed of courage, reaſon, or ſkill, ſufficient to defend himſelf; but if he had been capable of making a defence, ſays the author of his Life, "he could not be prepared for it." In anſwer to all this, Mattheſon obſerves, that "HANDEL, at the "time of the quarrel, was twenty years of age; tall, ſtrong, "broad-ſhouldered, and muſcular; conſequently, well able to de- "fend himſelf:" and adds, that "*a dry ſlap on the face was no* "*aſſaſſination, but rather a friendly hint, to put him on his guard.*"

This rencounter happened the 5th of December, 1704; and, as a proof of a ſpeedy reconciliation, Mattheſon tells us, that on the 30th of the ſame month, he accompanied the young compoſer to the rehearſal of his firſt opera of *Almira*, at the theatre, and per-

performed in it the principal part; and that, afterwards, they became greater friends than ever. This opera, though rehearſed at the end of 1704, was not publicly performed till the beginning of 1705, when it was greatly approved *(a)*.

On the 25th of February of the ſame year, he produced his ſecond opera, called *Nero*, which had likewiſe a very favourable reception *(b)*. It was at the end of the run of theſe two dramas that Mattheſon, who performed the principal man's part in both, quitted the ſtage, on his being appointed ſecretary to the Britiſh reſident at Hamburgh; an office in which he continued to the time of his death, at the diſtance of near ſixty years from his firſt appointment *(c)*.

That Mattheſon had more knowledge than taſte, no other proof need be given than the following conceit, which was related to me at Hamburgh. Late in life, in ſetting, as part of his own funeral anthem, the third verſe of the fourth chapter of Revelations: "And there was a *rain-bow* round about the throne," he contrived in a very full ſcore, to make every part form an *arch*, by a gradual aſcent and deſcent of the notes on paper, in plain counter-point; which appearance to the *eyes* of the performers, he probably thought would convey the idea of a *rain-bow* to the *ears* of the congregation!

(a) The German title of this opera is: Der in Kronen erlangte Glückswechſel, oder Almira, Koeniginn von Caſtilien; that is, *The Viciſſitudes of Royalty*, or ALMIRA *Queen of Caſtile*. There was an Epilogue to this drama, called *The Genius of Europe*, ſet by Keyſer.

(b) This opera was ſtyled in German: Nero, oder die durch Blut und Mord erlangte liebe; NERO, or, *Love obtained by Blood and Murder*.

(c) Mattheſon's firſt opera, called the *Pleiades*, was performed at Hamburgh, 1699. *Porſenna*, the ſecond, 1702. *Victor, Duke of Normandy*, the third, of which Schieferdecker compoſed the firſt act, Mattheſon the ſecond, and Bronner the third, was performed the ſame year. *Cleopatra*, the fourth, which occaſioned the quarrel between Mattheſon and HANDEL, 1704.

All

All the Muſic that I have ever ſeen by Mattheſon is ſteril of ideas and unintereſting. It has been ſaid, that he was a great performer on the harpſichord, and that HANDEL frequently amuſed himſelf with playing his pieces; in doing which, if ever he regarded Mattheſon as a formidable rival, his triumph muſt have been very complete in comparing them with his own, or with the inherent powers which he muſt have felt of producing better whenever he pleaſed. I am in poſſeſſion of a ſet of Twelve Leſſons by Mattheſon, engraved on copper, by Fletcher, in tall folio of eighteen ſtaved paper, London 1714; who, in a Preface ſpeaks of them as "Pieces which claim precedence to all others "of this nature; as being compoſed by one of the greateſt maſ- "ters of the age, in a taſte altogether pleaſing and ſublime." They conſiſt of *Overtures*, *Preludes*, *Fugues*, *Allemandes*, *Courantes*, *Gigues* and *Aires*; but, notwithſtanding the Editor's Eloge, like all the harpſichord muſic I ever ſaw, anterior to HANDEL's admirable *Suites de Pieces*, firſt Set, 1720; though in good harmony, it impreſſes the mind with no better idea of accent, grace, or paſſion, than the gingling of triangles, or bells of a pack-horſe; and is truly ſuch as degrades the inſtrument to the level of *ſounding braſs and a tinkling cymbal.*

From 1705 to 1708, when HANDEL ſet two other operas, *Florindo* and *Daſne*, he furniſhed nothing for the ſtage; though he had many ſcholars, compoſed harpſichord-pieces, ſingle ſongs, and cantatas, innumerable *(a)*.

During

(a) I procured at Hamburgh, in 1773, a manuſcript collection of cantatas, by the principal compoſers of the early part of the preſent century; among which are two by HANDEL, which I never ſaw elſewhere; and theſe, it is moſt probable, were produced in that city, during his reſidence there, previous to his arrival in England, or journey into Italy. One of theſe cantatas has a ſpirited accompaniment for a harpſichord, *obligato*. At the end is a ſhort air, which ſeems to contain the germ, or ſubject, of a favourite harpſichord leſſon, printed in the ſecond volume of his *Pieces de Cla-*

During his reſidence at Hamburgh, Mattheſon allows, that HANDEL improved his own ſtyle greatly, by his conſtant attendance at the opera; and ſays, that he was even more powerful upon the organ, in extempore fugues and counterpoint, than the famous Kuhnau of Leipſic, who was at this time regarded as a prodigy.

HANDEL having acquired by his operas at Hamburgh a ſum ſufficient to enable him to viſit Italy, ſet out for that ſeat of the Muſes, a journey after which every man of genius ſo ardently pants. He ſtaid ſome time at Florence, where he compoſed the opera of *Rodrigo*. From this city he went to Venice, where, in 1709, he produced his *Agrippina*, which is ſaid by his biographer to have been received with acclamation, and to have run thirty nights. Here he met with Domenico Scarlatti, Gaſparini, and Lotti.

The next place he viſited, was Rome, where he had an opportunity of hearing compoſitions and performers of the firſt claſs. Here the elder Scarlatti and Gaſparini had brought vocal muſic to great perfection, and Corelli, inſtrumental. At cardinal Ottoboni's, by whom HANDEL was greatly careſſed and patronized, he had frequently the advantage of hearing the natural and elegant Corelli perform his own works. Here our young compoſer produced a ſerenata: *Il Trionſo del Tempo (a)*; after which he proceeded to Naples, where he ſet *Acis and Galatea*, in Italian, to muſic totally different from the little Engliſh drama, written by Gay, which he ſet in 1721, for the duke of Chandos.

Clavecin, p. 5, the identical movement with which he ended the laſt concerto which he ever played in public. This cantata is the more likely to have been compoſed early in his youth, as there are ſome little liberties, and negligences in the compoſition, which have never appeared in his later productions.

(a) The original ſcore of this work is in his Majeſty's collection. In 1770, I purchaſed at Rome, among other manuſcript compoſitions by old maſters, ſix cantatas, *a voce Sola*, del Georgio Federigo HENDEL, *detto il Saſſone*, which were, probably, produced in this city during his reſidence there, about the year 1709: by the yellow colour of the ink, they ſeem to have been long tranſcribed. Some of them I have never ſeen in any other collection.

When he returned to Germany, on quitting Italy, at the latter end of 1709, or the beginning of 1710, the firſt place at which he ſtopt was Hanover; where he found a munificent patron in the Elector, who afterwards, on the death of queen Anne, aſcended the Engliſh throne, by the name of George the Firſt. This prince had in his ſervice, as maeſtro di capella, the elegant and learned compoſer Steffani, whom HANDEL had met before at Venice, and who now reſigned his office of maeſtro di capella to the Elector, in his favour. This venerable compoſer ſerved him as a model for the ſtyle of chamber duets, as well as facilitated his introduction to the ſmiles of his patron, the Elector, who ſettled on him a penſion of 1500 crowns, upon condition that he would return to his court, when he had completed his travels. HANDEL, acceding to this propoſition, went to Duſſeldorp, where he had a flattering reception from the Elector Palatine, who, likewiſe, wiſhed to retain him in his ſervice. But beſides the engagement into which he had entered with the Elector of Hanover, he was impatient to viſit England, where a paſſion for dramatic Muſic had already manifeſted itſelf in ſeveral aukward attempts at operas, and to which place he had received invitations from ſeveral of the nobility, whom he had ſeen in Italy and Hanover.

It was at the latter end of the year 1710, that he arrived in England; his reception was as flattering to himſelf as honourable to the nation, at this time no leſs ſucceſsful in war, than in the cultivation of the arts of peace. To the wit, poetry, literature, and ſcience, which marked this period of our hiſtory, HANDEL added all the blandiſhments of a nervous and learned Muſic, which he firſt brought hither, planted, and lived to ſee grow to a very flouriſhing ſtate.

Of the ſuperior talents and abilities, which HANDEL now poſſeſſed, and of the ſucceſs with which he had exerciſed both on the Continent, Fame, who in the character of *avant-coureur*, had wafted intelligence to this country, procured him an eaſy and favourable reception at court, and in many of the principal families of the kingdom. Aaron Hill, at this time manager of the opera, availing himſelf of his arrival, haſtily ſketched out the plan of a Muſical Drama, from Taſſo's Jeruſalem, and gave it to the Italian poet, Roſſi, to work into an opera, by the name of RINALDO. This Drama was firſt performed in March 1711, and HANDEL is ſaid, in the Preface, to have ſet it to Muſic *in a fortnight*.

Mr. Addiſon, in the Spectator, N° 5, with his uſual pleaſantry, but total inſenſibility to ſuperior muſical excellence, mentions this circumſtance among other frivolous incidents, which he means to ridicule. Had this writer and critic, ſo admirable in other reſpects, been poſſeſſed of judgment and feeling in Muſic equal to his learning and taſte in literature, he would have diſcovered that to compoſe an entire opera in leſs time than a copyiſt could tranſcribe it, and in a more maſterly and original ſtyle than had ever before been heard in this, or perhaps, any country, was not a fair ſubject for ſarcaſm. All Muſic ſeems alike to Addiſon, except French Recitative, for which he ſeems to have a particular predilection *(a)*.

The opera of *Rinaldo*, in which the celebrated Nicolini and Valentini, the firſt Italian ſingers that appeared on our ſtage, performed; was the delight of the nation during many years: as it was revived 1712, 1717, and 1731.

After remaining about a year in this country, and eſtabliſhing a great reputation on the ſolid baſis of the moſt exalted and indiſ-

(a) Spectator, N° 29.

putable

putable merit, both as a compoſer and performer, he returned to Hanover, on a promiſe made to his moſt powerful Engliſh friends to reviſit this kingdom again, as ſoon as he could obtain permiſſion of his Electoral Highneſs and patron. About the end of the year 1712, this permiſſion was granted for a limited time. And we find his *Paſtor Fido*, and *Theſeus*, in the liſt of Italian operas, brought on the Engliſh ſtage, this and the following year. And in 1715, *Amadige*, or *Amadis of Gaul*. In all theſe operas Nicolini, Valentini, Margarita, and Mrs. Anaſtaſia Robinſon, were the principal ſingers.

Not long after his ſecond arrival in London, the peace of Utrecht having been brought to a concluſion, HANDEL was preferred to all others, ſeemingly without a murmur from native Muſicians, to compoſe the Hymn of Gratitude and Triumph on the occaſion. Envy, though outrageous and noiſy at the ſucceſs of comparative abilities, is ſtruck dumb and blind by exceſs of ſuperiority. The grand *Te Deum* and *Jubilate*, which he ſet on this occaſion, were compoſed with ſuch force, regularity, and inſtrumental effects, as the Engliſh had never heard before. Purcell's *Te Deum*, in deſign, and expreſſion of the words, is, perhaps, ſuperior to all others; but in grandeur and richneſs of accompaniment, nothing but national partiality can deny HANDEL the preference. The queen ſettled on him for life a penſion of Two Hundred pounds per annum. And all who had heard Rinaldo, wiſhed him again employed for the opera; ſo that the multiplicity of buſineſs, and the many protectors and friends he met with in England, a little impaired the memory of our great compoſer with reſpect to continental connections; and he ſeemed to think of nothing leſs than returning to Hanover till after the death of queen Anne, in 1714, when his majeſty, George the Firſt,

arriving in England, ſaved him the trouble of a German tour.

HANDEL, conſcious of his deficiency in reſpect and gratitude, to a prince who honoured him with ſuch flattering marks of approbation and bounty, durſt not approach the court, till by the ingenuity and friendly interpoſition of baron Kilmanſegge, he was reſtored to favour in the following manner. The king, ſoon after his arrival in theſe kingdoms, having been prevailed on to form a party on the water, the deſign was communicated to HANDEL, who was adviſed to compoſe ſome pieces expreſſly for the occaſion; the performance of which he ſecretly conducted in a boat, that accompanied the royal barge. Upon hearing theſe compoſitions, which have been ſince ſo well known, and ſo juſtly celebrated under the title of the *Water-Muſic*, his majeſty, equally ſurpriſed and pleaſed by their excellence, eagerly enquired who was the author of them; when the baron acquainted the king that they were the productions of a faithful ſervant of his majeſty, who, conſcious of the cauſe of diſpleaſure which he had given to ſo gracious a protector, durſt not preſume to approach his royal preſence, till he had aſſurances that by every poſſible demonſtration of duty and gratitude in future, he might hope to obtain a pardon. This interceſſion having been graciouſly accepted, HANDEL was reſtored to favour, and his compoſitions honoured with the moſt flattering marks of royal approbation. And as a ratification of the delinquent's peace, thus eaſily obtained, his majeſty was pleaſed to add a penſion of Two Hundred pounds a-year to that which had been previouſly conferred on him by queen Anne; and not many years after, when he was employed to teach the young princeſſes, another penſion of the ſame value was added to the former grants, by her majeſty queen Caroline.

From

From the year 1715 to 1720, I find, in the records of the Muſical Drama, no new opera that was ſet by HANDEL. The firſt three years of this period were chiefly ſpent at the earl of Burlington's, a nobleman, whoſe taſte and judgment in the fine arts were as exquiſite as his patronage to their votaries was liberal. And during the other two years, HANDEL ſeems to have been employed at Cannons, as maeſtro di capella to the duke of Chandos; who, among other ſplendid and princely kinds of magnificence, eſtabliſhed a chapel, in which the cathedral ſervice was daily performed by a choir of voices and inſtruments, ſuperior, at that time, perhaps, in number and excellence, to that of any ſovereign prince in Europe. Here HANDEL produced, beſides his anthems, the chief part of his hautbois concertos, ſonatas, leſſons, and organ fugues; which are all ſo maſterly, ſpirited, and exquiſite in their ſeveral kinds, that if he had never compoſed an opera, oratorio, Te Deum, duet, cantata, or any other ſpecies of vocal muſic, his name would have been had in reverence by true Muſicians, as long as the characters in which they are written, ſhould continue to be legible.

We come now to the buſieſt and moſt glorious period of HANDEL's life; who, arrived at that ſtage of exiſtence which Dante calls

Il mezzo del cammin di noſtra vita:

when the human frame and faculties have acquired their utmoſt ſtrength and vigour; was endowed with great natural powers, highly improved by cultivation; with a hand which no difficulties could embarraſs; a genius for compoſition unbounded; at the head of a profeſſion which facilitates acceſs to the great, and, with extraordinary abilities, enſures their patronage; high in the favour of the

the ſovereign, nobles, and public, of a great and powerful nation, at a period of its greateſt happineſs and tranquillity; when it was not only bleſt with leiſure and zeal to cultivate the arts of peace, but with power, liberally to reward thoſe whoſe ſucceſsful efforts had carried them beyond the bounds of mediocrity.

Such were HANDEL's circumſtances and ſituation, when a plan was formed, by the Engliſh nobility and gentry, for eſtabliſhing a fund for the ſupport of Italian operas, of which he was to be the compoſer and director; and, as his Majeſty king George the Firſt was pleaſed to ſubſcribe one thouſand pounds towards the execution of this deſign, and to let his name appear at the head of the ſubſcription, amounting to fifty thouſand pounds, this ſociety was called the *Royal Academy*.

When HANDEL quitted his employment at Cannons, he was commiſſioned by this academy to go to Dreſden, in order to engage ſingers. Here he found Seneſino, Duraſtanti, Berenſtadt, and Boſchi, whom he brought over to England.

Though the principal intention, in forming the academy, was to appoint HANDEL the compoſer and director of the band; the public was not, as yet, unanimous in ſupporting this meaſure. Bononcini and Attilio had been invited over by the former managers of the opera; and as they were compoſers of acknowledged merit, there was an unwillingneſs in their admirers and friends to conſent to their diſmiſſion. And it was now that thoſe muſical feuds began, of which Swift has perpetuated the memory, by an epigram, which throws contempt upon an art, and upon artiſts, whoſe merit he never felt or underſtood, though he could ſee the ridicule of their ſituation. But the ſatiriſt who diſcovers no difference between a Dryden and a Bell-man, or a Raphael and a Houſe-painter, is full as well qualified to talk about poetry and painting,

painting, as he about muſic, who neither ſees nor hears the difference between the productions of a HANDEL or a Bononcini, and thoſe of the moſt deſpicable fiddler.

No art, ſcience, or even religious or moral truth, can parry the aſſaults of ridicule, when wit and humour guide the thruſt; though, luckily, the wounds inflicted are ſlight, and cure themſelves. For neither lovers of art, nor of religion and virtue, can be long diverted from their purſuits, by a gibe or *bon mot*. A great nation, in which there are ſo many opulent individuals, wants innocent amuſements for their leiſure hours, when quitting the chace and rural ſports they are aſſembled together in the capital; and in the beſt and moſt poliſhed ages of the world, the cultivation and patronage of Muſic have employed the talents and munificence of its moſt diſtinguiſhed inhabitants.

Muſical dramas or operas, which during the laſt century travelled from Italy to France, and from France to England, were never attempted in the Italian language till the reign of queen Anne, when the firſt eſſays were made by performers, partly natives, and partly Italians, who ſeverally uſed their own dialect; the abſurdity of which Addiſon has ridiculed with great humour and pleaſantry in the Spectator, No. 18 *(a)*. But as the love for operas was then, and has been ever ſince, moſt powerfully excited in ſuch of our nobility and gentry as have viſited Italy in their youth, it is natural that they ſhould at all times wiſh to have theſe exhibitions as near the models with which they had been acquainted on the continent, as poſſible. And of ſuch we may ſuppoſe the Royal Academy was compoſed: as the duke of New-

(a) The Germans, according to Riccoboni, at the beginning of this century, had operas performed in the ſame manner; the Recitative being pronounced in German, and the Airs in Italian.

caſtle,

caſtle, was governor; lord Bingley, deputy-governor; and the dukes of Portland and Queenſbury, earls of Burlington, Stair, and Waldegrave, lords Chetwynd and Stanhope, James Bruce, eſq. colonel Blathwait, Thomas Coke, of Norfolk, eſq. Conyers D'Arcy, eſq. brigadier-general Dormer, Bryan Fairfax, eſq. colonel O'Hara, George Harriſon, eſq. brigadier-general Hunter, William Pulteney, eſq. ſir John Vanbrugh, major-general Wade, and Francis Whitworth, eſq. directors.

Theſe great and eminent perſonages could not, however, get the whole management of the operas into their own hands, all at once: oppoſitions are no leſs frequent, than furious, in popular governments; and, on this occaſion, political animoſities were blended with Muſical faction. All the friends of Bononcini and Attilio were not, perhaps, entirely guided by the love of Muſic, and ſenſe of their ſuperiority; the love of power, and hatred of the abettors of HANDEL, for party conſiderations, furniſhed fuel to their zeal; and HANDEL, ere they gave way, was forced to mount the ſtage, and fight his own battle. For all that his friends could obtain of thoſe that were in poſſeſſion of the Theatre in the Haymarket, at his return from Dreſden, with auxiliaries, was permiſſion to have his opera of *Radamiſtus* performed there in 1720 *(a)*. On this occaſion, the expectations which the public had formed of the abilities of HANDEL, from his great reputation, and the ſpecimens he had already given, may be eſtimated by the crouds which aſſembled at the Opera-Houſe doors, when there was no longer any room for their admiſſion. And the applauſe of thoſe who were ſo fortunate as to obtain places, evinced the full gratification of the delight they expected to receive. This

(a) This opera, under the title of *Zenobia*, was tranſlated into German, by Mattheſon, and performed to HANDEL's Muſic, in Hamburgh. 1721.

opera,

opera, however, with all its merit and ſucceſs, did not obtain for HANDEL a victory ſufficiently deciſive, to oblige the enemy to quit the field.

After this, as the laſt experiment, it was agreed by the friends of the three ſeveral rivals, that each of them ſhould compoſe an act of the ſame opera, with an overture to each act. The drama fixed upon was *Mutius Scævola*, of which Bononcini ſet the firſt act, Attilio the ſecond, and HANDEL the third; and this fiery trial determined the point of precedence between him and his competitors: the act in *Mutius Scævola*, which HANDEL compoſed, being pronounced ſuperior to both the others, and Bononcini's the next in merit.

It was the more honourable to our great Muſician to have vanquiſhed ſuch a champion as Bononcini, as he was a man of great abilities, and very high in reputation all over Europe. Few, indeed, are able, when the difference is doubtful, to diſcriminate and ſet a juſt value on the nicer ſhades of excellence: a grain of partiality or prejudice can then turn the ſcale of either ſide, when in the hands of the beſt judges; but how ſhall ignorance dare to determine, what learning and experience can ſcarce diſcern?

The truth is, that Bononcini's peculiar merit in ſetting Italian words ſeems to have been out of the reach of an Engliſh audience, and that Italians were alone competent to judge of it; who ſay, that his knowledge in ſinging and in their language was ſuch as rendered his *cantilena*, or melody, more natural and elegant to vocal performers, and his *recitatives* more paſſionate, and expreſſive of nicer ſenſations and inflexions, to every hearer accuſtomed to the tones of Italian ſpeech, than thoſe of his rival; but in majeſty, grandeur, force, fire, and invention, which are not local

beauties, but ſtriking and intelligible in all countries, HANDEL was infinitely his ſuperior.

From this memorable victory, in 1721, the Royal Academy ſeems to have been firmly eſtabliſhed during the ſpace of eight or nine years, under the management of HANDEL's moſt powerful friends and greateſt admirers; who, in appointing him the principal compoſer, gave him abſolute dominion over the performers *(a)*.

There were, however, from time to time, ſeveral operas of Bononcini and Attilio exhibited during this period, on the ſame ſtage, and by the ſame performers, as thoſe of HANDEL; perhaps to conciliate parties: the lovers of Muſic are ſometimes froward, capricious, and unreaſonable, as well as the profeſſors. This was never more conſpicuous to by-ſtanders, than in the violence of party for the two ſingers, Cuzzoni and Fauſtina, in the year 1727; at which time, though both were excellent performers, in different ſtyles, yet ſo unwilling was the Engliſh public to be pleaſed with both, that when the admirers of one of theſe ſirens began to applaud, thoſe of the other were ſure to hiſs. It ſeems as impoſſible for two ſingers of equal merit to tread the ſame ſtage, *a parte eguale*, as for two people to ride on the ſame horſe, without one being behind.

" If the frequenters of Muſical Dramas had not then been " enemies to their own pleaſure, the merit of theſe ſingers con- " ſiſted of excellencies ſo different and diſtinct, that they might

(a) During this proſperous period, after *Radamiſto*, and *Muzio Scevola*, HANDEL produced his operas of *Ottone*, *Floridante*, *Flavio*, *Giulio Ceſare*, *Tamerlano*, *Rodelinda*, *Scipione*, *Alceſſandro*, *Ricardo prime*, *Ammeto*, *Siroe*, *Tolomeo*, *Lotario*, *Partenope*, and *Poro*.

have

" have applauded each by turns, and, from their ſeveral perfec-
" tions, by turns, have received equal delight.

" Unluckily for moderate people, who ſeek pleaſure from ta-
" lents wherever they can be found, the violence of theſe feuds
" has cured all ſucceeding managers of the extravagance of en-
" gaging two fingers of the ſame ſex, at a time, of diſputable
" abilities *(a)*."

Dr. Arbuthnot, on occaſion of the conteſted rights of *ſupremacy* between theſe theatrical principals and their adherents, publiſhed, 1728, a *Manifeſto*, intitled, " The Devil to pay at St. James's :
" or a full and true account of a moſt horrid and bloody battle
" between *Madame Fauſtina* and *Madame Cuzzoni*. Alſo a hot
" ſkirmiſh between *Signor Boſchi* and *Signor Palmerini*. More-
" over, how *Seneſino* has taken ſnuff, is going to leave the opera,
" and ſing pſalms at *Henley*'s Oratory *(b)*."

A few years after, a quarrel happened between HANDEL and Seneſino, which broke up the Academy, and was not only injurious to the fortune of our great Compoſer, but the cauſe of infinite trouble and vexation to him, during the reſt of his life.

Dr. Arbuthnot, who was always a very zealous and active friend to HANDEL, entered the liſts, as his champion, whenever an opportunity offered of defending his cauſe. And, as *ridicule* ſupplied him with all kinds of ammunition, and the *pen* was his moſt irreſiſtible weapon, he had recourſe to theſe in the contention with Seneſino, who had almoſt all the great barons of the realm for his allies. And in this ſecond *puny* war, after mutual complaints of treaties violated, rights infringed, and hoſtilities committed, he publiſhed another *Manifeſto*, which had for title,

(*a*) *Journal of a Muſical Tour through Germany*, &c. vol. ii. p. 189.

(*b*) *Arbuthnot's Miſcellanies*, vol. i. from p. 213, to 216.

beauties, but ſtriking and intelligible in all countries, HANDEL was infinitely his ſuperior.

From this memorable victory, in 1721, the Royal Academy ſeems to have been firmly eſtabliſhed during the ſpace of eight or nine years, under the management of HANDEL's moſt powerful friends and greateſt admirers; who, in appointing him the principal compoſer, gave him abſolute dominion over the performers *(a)*.

There were, however, from time to time, ſeveral operas of Bononcini and Attilio exhibited during this period, on the ſame ſtage, and by the ſame performers, as thoſe of HANDEL; perhaps to conciliate parties: the lovers of Muſic are ſometimes froward, capricious, and unreaſonable, as well as the profeſſors. This was never more conſpicuous to by-ſtanders, than in the violence of party for the two ſingers, Cuzzoni and Fauſtina, in the year 1727; at which time, though both were excellent performers, in different ſtyles, yet ſo unwilling was the Engliſh public to be pleaſed with both, that when the admirers of one of theſe ſirens began to applaud, thoſe of the other were ſure to hiſs. It ſeems as impoſſible for two ſingers of equal merit to tread the ſame ſtage, *a parte eguale*, as for two people to ride on the ſame horſe, without one being behind.

" If the frequenters of Muſical Dramas had not then been " enemies to their own pleaſure, the merit of theſe ſingers con- " ſiſted of excellencies ſo different and diſtinct, that they might

(a) During this proſperous period, after *Radamiſto*, and *Muzio Scevola*, HANDEL produced his operas of *Ottone*, *Floridante*, *Flavio*, *Giulio Ceſare*, *Tamerlano*, *Rodelinda*, *Scipione*, *Aleſſandro*, *Ricardo prime*, *Ammeto*, *Siroe*, *Tolomeo*, *Lotario*, *Partenope*, and *Poro*.

have

" have applauded each by turns, and, from their ſeveral perfec-
" tions, by turns, have received equal delight.

" Unluckily for moderate people, who ſeek pleaſure from ta-
" lents wherever they can be found, the violence of theſe feuds
" has cured all ſucceeding managers of the extravagance of en-
" gaging two ſingers of the ſame ſex, at a time, of diſputable
" abilities *(a)*."

Dr. Arbuthnot, on occaſion of the conteſted rights of *ſupremacy* between theſe theatrical principals and their adherents, publiſhed, 1728, a *Manifeſto*, intitled, " The Devil to pay at St. James's:
" or a full and true account of a moſt horrid and bloody battle
" between *Madame Fauſtina* and *Madame Cuzzoni*. Alſo a hot
" ſkirmiſh between *Signor Boſchi* and *Signor Palmerini*. More-
" over, how *Seneſino* has taken ſnuff, is going to leave the opera,
" and ſing pſalms at *Henley*'s Oratory *(b)*."

A few years after, a quarrel happened between HANDEL and Seneſino, which broke up the Academy, and was not only injurious to the fortune of our great Compoſer, but the cauſe of infinite trouble and vexation to him, during the reſt of his life.

Dr. Arbuthnot, who was always a very zealous and active friend to HANDEL, entered the liſts, as his champion, whenever an opportunity offered of defending his cauſe. And, as *ridicule* ſupplied him with all kinds of ammunition, and the *pen* was his moſt irreſiſtible weapon, he had recourſe to theſe in the contention with Seneſino, who had almoſt all the great barons of the realm for his allies. And in this ſecond *puny* war, after mutual complaints of treaties violated, rights infringed, and hoſtilities committed, he publiſhed another *Manifeſto*, which had for title,

(a) *Journal of a Muſical Tour through Germany*, &c. vol. ii. p. 189.

(b) *Arbuthnot's Miſcellanies*, vol. i. from p. 213, to 216.

" Harmony in an Uproar: a Letter to GEORGE FREDERICK " HANDEL, eſq. maſter of the Opera-houſe in the Hay- " market, from *Hurlothrumbo Johnſon*, eſq. compoſer extraor- " dinary to all the theatres in Great Britain, excepting that at " the Haymarket. In which the rights and merits of both " Operas are properly conſidered."

A court is inſtituted in this pamphlet for the trial of HANDEL, who is ordered to hold up his hand, and to anſwer to the following ſeveral high crimes and miſdemeanors committed upon the wills and underſtandings of the people of this country.

Imprimis, he is charged with having bewitched us for the ſpace of twenty years paſt.

Secondly, with moſt inſolently daring to give us good Muſic and ſound Harmony, when we wanted bad.

Thirdly, with moſt feloniouſly and arrogantly aſſuming to himſelf an uncontrouled power of pleaſing us whether we would or no; and with often being ſo bold as to charm us, when we were poſitively reſolved to be out of humour.

Dr. *Puſhpin* and Dr. *Blue* (Pepuſch and Green) accuſe him of not being a graduate in either of the univerſities; and the former of not having read Euclid, or ſtudied the Greek modes. Others of having compoſed ſuch Muſic as not only puzzled our pariſh clerks and threw out every congregation, but ſuch as never man produced before. Then, as an inſtance of his having practiſed ſorcery in this kingdom on his majeſty's liege ſubjects, and of bewitching every ſenſe we have, it is aſſerted that there was not a letter in any one of his public bills but had magic in it; and that if at any time a ſqueak of one of his fiddles, or a tooting of one of his pipes was to be heard, away danced the whole town, helter ſkelter, crouding, preſſing, and ſhoving; and happy were they

they who could be ſqueezed to death. At length the court concludes, that " as *one* Opera is ſuch an enormous ſource of ex-
" pence, luxury, idleneſs, ſloth and effeminacy, there could be
" no way ſo proper to redreſs theſe grievances, as the ſetting up
" *another*."

The only parts of this ironical letter which ſeem to be ſerious are printed in Italics, and contain HANDEL's own defence: who, in anſwer to the crimes with which he was charged by his opponents is made to ſay, " that he was no way to blame in the whole
" affair; but that when *Seneſino* had declared he would leave
" England, he thought himſelf obliged in honour to proceed with
" his contract, and provide for himſelf elſewhere; that as for
" *Cuzzoni*, he had no thought of her, no hopes of her, nor no
" want of her, *Strada* being in all reſpects infinitely ſuperior,
" in any excellency required for the ſtage; as for ſingers in the
" under parts, he had provided the beſt ſet we ever had yet;
" though baſely deſerted by *Montagnana*, after having ſigned a
" formal contract to ſerve him the whole of this ſeaſon; which
" he might ſtill force him to do were he not more afraid of
" Weſtminſter-hall than ten thouſand D—rs, or ten thouſand
" D—ls. That as he was obliged to carry on operas this win-
" ter, he imagined he might be at liberty to proceed in the buſi-
" neſs in that manner which would prove moſt to the ſatisfaction
" of the unprejudiced part of the nobility and gentry, and his
" own intereſt and honour."—He afterwards adds, " that it was
" impoſſible for him to comply with the unreaſonable and ſavage
" propoſals made to him; by which he was to give up all con-
" tracts, promiſes, nay riſque his fortune, to gratify fantaſtical
" whims and unjuſt piques." And continues to plead his own cauſe, by ſaying, " that if he was miſled, or had judged wrong

" at any time in raiſing the price of his tickets, he was ſufficiently puniſhed, without carrying reſentment on that account to ſuch a length *(a)*. But in whatever light the entertainment was conſidered, it certainly better merited ſuch an extravagant price, than any other ever yet exhibited in this nation."

In another part of this pamphlet, a partizan for HANDEL, captivated by the vocal powers of *Careſtini*, whom he had brought over in order to ſuperſede *Seneſino*, accoſts *Hurlothrumbo* in the following manner: " So, Sir, I hear you are a great ſtickler for " the Opera at Lincoln's-Inn-Fields; a pretty ſet of ſingers, truly! " and for compoſers, you out-do the world!—Don't you think, " ſays he, at this time of life, *Seneſino* could twang a prayer " finely through the noſe in petticoats at a conventicle? Hah! " *(b)*—Or, what think you, ſays he, of *Signora Celeſti* ſnuffling " a hymn there in concert; or, *Madame Bertolli*, with her unmeaning voice, with as little force in it as a pair of Smith's " bellows with twenty holes in the ſides: Your baſe, indeed *(c)*,

(a) Beſides the offence given to the ſubſcribers of the Royal Academy, by refuſing to compoſe for, or even employ Seneſino, the great favourite of the nation, HANDEL diſobliged them extremely, not only by raiſing the price of admiſſion to a Guinea, but by refuſing to let them occupy their particular boxes in the Haymarket theatre, when he performed there his oratorio of *Eſther*, in the ſummer of 1732.

(b) Quadrio has placed Seneſino in the liſt of ſingers who began to diſtinguiſh themſelves between the year 1690 and 1700; but in examining a collection of more than fifty volumes of Italian operas, or muſical dramas, his name appears in no *Dramatis Perſonæ*, or even Muſical tract, that I have ſeen, till the year 1719, when he ſung the firſt man's part in an opera compoſed by Lotti, for the court of the king of Poland, at Dreſden, where he was engaged by HANDEL for the Royal Academy in England. Strange and ſudden viciſſitudes in human affairs have often excited ſurpriſe and exclamation, but in none, I believe, more frequently than in ſuch as concern Muſic. Who could have imagined that it would ever become neceſſary for HANDEL himſelf, or his friends, to depreciate the talents and *write down* SENESINO, whoſe voice, action, taſte, and abilities, had hitherto been the props of his fame and fortune! But hiſtory ſhews that many a ſovereign has been greatly incommoded by the deſertion and reſentment of a diſcarded general.

(c) Montagnana.

" makes

" makes a humming noiſe, and could roar to ſome purpoſe, if " he had ſongs proper for him: as for your *Signora Fagotto (a)*, " ſhe, indeed, may, with her maſter, be ſent home to ſchool " again; and by the time ſhe is fourſcore, ſhe'll prove a vaſt " addition to a bonfire; or make a fine Duenna in a Spaniſh " opera.

" Your compoſers too have behaved notably truly; your *Por-* " *poiſe (b)*, ſays he, may roul and rumble about as he pleaſes, " and prelude to a ſtorm of his own raiſing; but you ſhould let " him know, that a bad imitation always wants the air and ſpirit " of an original, and that there is a wide difference betwixt full " harmony, and making a noiſe.—I know your expectations are " very high from the performance of the king of *Arragon (c)*; " but that *Trolly Colly* compoſer, a ſtupid *cantata-thrummer*, " muſt make a mighty poor figure in an opera; though he was " ſo nice laſt winter, that he would not allow that HANDEL " could compoſe, or *Seneſino* ſing: what art he has uſed, to pro- " duce him now as the firſt voice in Europe, I cannot imagine; " but you muſt not depend upon his majeſty too far; for to my " knowledge, he has been engaged by a formal deputation from " the general aſſembly of North Britain, to new-ſet their Scotch " Pſalms, and to be clerk to the high-kirk in Edinburgh, with " a ſalary of one hundred pounds Scots, per annum."

This Letter, dated February 12, 1733, was publiſhed in a Shilling pamphlet, and occupies twenty-four pages in the ſecond volume of Arbuthnot's Miſcellanies. Some of the irony and hu-

(a) *Segatti*, the firſt woman in the opera eſtabliſhed by the nobility in Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, till the ſecond arrival of *Cuzzoni*.

(b) *Porpora*.

(c) *Arrigoni*, the Luteniſt.

mour

mour is well pointed, and much of the muſical politics of the day may be gathered from its peruſal. As here, we ſee who ſided with the nobility, when they ſet up an opera againſt HANDEL in Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, and engaged Porpora and Arrigoni to compoſe, and placed Seneſino and Segatti, till the arrival of Cuzzoni, at the head of the ſingers. It appears here, likewiſe, that Montagnana, the celebrated baſe-ſinger, Celeſte, and Bertolli, two of HANDEL's female performers, as well as Arrigoni, the luteniſt, with Rolli (*Rowley Powley*) the Italian opera poet, had deſerted from his ſtandard; and that Dr. Pepuſch, Dr. Green, and Holcombe (Mr. *Honeycomb*), were on the ſide of the opponents; while Careſtini, Strada, the Negri family, Duraſtanti and Scalzi, were at the head of his own troop.

It is now too late to determine who was the aggreſſor in this long and ruinous war; perhaps HANDEL exerciſed his power too roughly, and Seneſino was too impatient of controul *(a)*. Perhaps too, the nobility carried their reſentment too far, in ſetting up another opera to the ruin of a man of ſuch uncommon worth and abilities; and, perhaps, if HANDEL's temper had at all reſembled his finger, in flexibility, a reconciliation might have been effected on no very mortifying or diſhonourable terms. It is painful to dwell on this part of his life, which was one continued tiſſue of loſſes and misfortunes. He produced thirty operas between the year 1721 and 1740; yet, after the diſſolution of the Academy, in 1729, none were attended with the ſucceſs that was due to their intrinſic and ſuperior merit, though

(a) It is related by Quantz, in the Memoirs of his own Life, that Seneſino had a quarrel with Heinechen, the king of Poland's maeſtro di capella, in 1719, which broke up the troop, and was the occaſion of his coming to England. *Germ. Tour.* vol. ii. p. 176.

ſome

ſome of the beſt were poſterior to that period. Neglect and oppoſition conſpired to rob him at once of health, fame, and fortune!

Indeed the breach with the Academy and enmity to Seneſino, may with truth be ſaid to have had ſome effect on his later Dramatic compoſitions. Seneſino had ſo noble a voice and manner of ſinging, was ſo admirable an actor, and in ſuch high favour with the public, that beſides the real force and energy of his performance, there was an additional weight and importance given to whatever he ſung, by the elevated ſituation in which he ſtood with the audience. I have been acquainted with ſeveral maſters, and perſons of judgment and probity, who perfectly remembering his performance and its effects on themſelves and the public, aſſured me, that none of the great ſingers, who have ſince viſited this country, ever gave ſuch exquiſite pleaſure and heart-felt ſatisfaction as Seneſino; who, without high notes or rapid execution, by the majeſty and dignity of his perſon, geſtures, voice, and expreſſion, captivated more, though he ſurpriſed leſs, than Farinelli, Caffarelli, Conti detto Gizziello, Careſtini, or any of their immediate ſucceſſors. It is impoſſible for a compoſer to ſet a ſong to muſic without thinking of the talents and abilities of the ſinger who is to perform it, and caſting the air in his particular caliber.

The ſingers engaged and employed by HANDEL, after the ſchiſm of Seneſino, brought over a new ſtyle of ſinging, and were poſſeſſed of vocal feats of activity to which he was never partial; it has, however been, I think, unjuſtly ſaid, that the operas he compoſed after the quarrel "have ſo little to recommend them, "that few would take them for the work of the ſame author." Can that ſevere ſentence be reconciled to judgment, truth, and can-

candour, in ſpeaking of *Lotharius*, *Ariadne*, *Alcina*, *Berenice*, *Ariodante*, *Xerxes*, and *Faramond?* The voice part of his ſongs was generally proportioned to the abilities of his ſingers, and it muſt be owned, that, with a few exceptions, thoſe of his late operas, and oratorios, were not poſſeſſed of great powers either of voice, taſte, expreſſion, or execution *(a)*. Yet ſo unbounded were his orcheſtra reſources, that he never failed making judges of Muſic ample amends for deficiencies of voice or talents in a ſinger, by the richneſs and ingenuity of his accompaniments. And it may, perhaps, be ſaid, that his beſt *vocal* thoughts, or melodies, ſeem to have been inſpired by the troop for which he compoſed, in 1727, at the head of which were Seneſino, Boſchi, Cuzzoni, and Fauſtina, all poſſeſſed of ſuch different kinds of excellence, as might have ſupported, and ſung into favour, the worſt Muſic that ever was compoſed. There are airs in *Siroe*, which have much merit of a different kind from that which all candid judges readily allow him: for *Non vi piacque ingiuſti Dei*, ſung by Fauſtina, and *Deggio morire o ſtelle*, by Seneſino, in that opera, are ſongs with quiet accompaniments in the ſtyle of the moſt capital modern Airs, in which the ſinger and the poet are

(a) Careſtini, *Conti detto Gizziello*, and *Caffarello*, were all great ſingers, in a new ſtyle of execution, which HANDEL was unwilling to flatter. *Verdi prati*, which was conſtantly encored during the whole run of *Alcina*, was, at firſt, ſent back to HANDEL by Careſtini, as unfit for him to ſing; upon which he went, in a great rage, to his houſe, and in a way which few compoſers, except HANDEL, ever ventured to accoſt a *firſt-finger*, cries out: "You toc! don't I "know better as your ſeluf, vaat is peſt "for you to ſing? If you vill not ſing all "de ſong vaat I give you, I vill not pay "you ein ſtiver."

His government of ſingers was certainly ſomewhat deſpotic: for, upon Cuzzoni inſolently refuſing to ſing his admirable air, *Falſa Imagine*, in *Otho*, he told her that he always knew ſhe was a *very Devil*; but that he ſhould now let *her* know, in her turn, that he was *Beelzebub*, the *Prince of the Devils*. And then, taking her up by the waiſt, ſwore, if ſhe did not immediately obey his orders, he would throw her out of the window.

equally

equally reſpected. Theſe were compoſed in 1728, about the time that Vinci and Haſſe had begun to thin and ſimplify accompaniment, as well as to poliſh melody. In the firſt of theſe Airs the voice-part is beautiful and a *canevas* for a great ſinger; in the ſecond, the effects by modulation and broken ſentences of melody are truly pathetic and theatrical: the firſt violin admirably filling up the chaſms in the principal melody, while the ſecond violin, tenor, and baſe, are murmuring in the ſubdued accompaniment of iterated notes in modern ſongs. By theſe two Airs it appears that HANDEL, who had always more ſolidity and contrivance than his cotemporaries, penetrated very far into thoſe regions of taſte and refinement at which his ſucceſſors only arrived, by a ſlow progreſs, half a century after.

We ſhall now quit his dramatic tranſactions, and confine this narration to ſuch incidents as gave riſe to the compoſition and public performance of his ORATORIOS, which being in our own language, have chiefly endeared him to the nation.

Sacred Dramas, or ORATORIOS, are of great antiquity in Italy, if that title be allowed to the legendary tales, myſteries, and moralities, in which hymns, pſalms, ſongs, and choruſes, were incidentally introduced; but the firſt regular ſacred Drama that was wholly ſung, and in which the Dialogue was carried on in *Recitative*, was entitled *Anima e Corpo*; it was ſet to muſic by Emilio del Cavalieri, and firſt performed at Rome, in February, 1600, the ſame year as ſecular muſical Dramas, or OPERAS, had their beginning at Florence. The Sacred Dramas, which, during the laſt century, were performed in the churches and convents of Italy, and generally in action, are innumerable; but the title of ORATORIO was firſt given to this ſpecies of *Myſtery in Muſic*, by

Franceſco Balducci, about 1645, after which time it became the general term for ſuch productions *(a)*. Indeed it appears from the *Drammaturgia* of Italy, that more *Dramme Sacre*, or *Rappreſentazioni Muſicali*, on religious ſubjects, were performed at Palermo, and, even Naples, during the latter end of the laſt century, and beginning of this, than ſecular. At the church of *S. Girolamo della Carità*, and *La Chieſa Nuova*, at Rome, Oratorios are ſtill conſtantly performed on Sundays, from All-Saints day till Palm-Sunday, and on all feſtivals; and the conſervatorios at Venice are ſtill conſtant in the uſe of theſe Dramas.

Eſther, compoſed for the duke of Chandos, in 1720, was the firſt Oratorio which HANDEL ſet to muſic. And eleven years after its performance at Cannons, a copy of the ſcore having been obtained, it was repreſented, in action, by the Children of his Majeſty's Chapel, at the houſe of Mr. Bernard Gates, maſter of the boys, in James-ſtreet, Weſtminſter, on Wedneſday, February 23, 1731 *(b)*. The Chorus, conſiſting of performers from the Chapel-Royal and Weſtminſter-Abbey, was placed after the manner of the ancients, between the ſtage and orcheſtra; and the inſtrumental parts were chiefly performed by Gentlemen who were

(*a*) Quadrio, *Storia d'ogna Poeſia*, tom. v. p. 495. The word *Oratorio* had its origin from the early introduction of a more artificial kind of muſic than *canto fermo*, or the maſs in a conſtant chorus of four parts, at the ORATORY of San Filippo Neri, at Rome, who died 1595.

(*b*) Dr. Randal of Cambridge, Mr. Beard, and Mr. Barrow, ſtill living, were among the children who performed on this occaſion.

This Oratorio, and *Athalia*, ſeem both to have been taken from Racine's two celebrated tragedies of *Eſther* and *Athalie*, written for muſic, and performed at the convent of St. Cyr, founded by madame de Maintenon. Nothing, however, but the Choruſes of theſe ſacred Dramas was ever ſung in France, nor was the muſic of theſe Choruſes ſet by Lulli, as inadvertently aſſerted in the former Life of HANDEL. Indeed, Lulli, unluckily, died two years before the firſt of theſe tragedies was repreſented; that is, in 1687, and *Eſther* was not performed at St. Cyr, till 1689.

mem-

members of the Philarmonic Society. After this, it was performed by the ſame ſingers at the Crown and Anchor, which is ſaid to have firſt ſuggeſted to HANDEL the idea of bringing Oratorios on the ſtage. And in 1732, *Eſther* was performed at the Haymarket, Ten Nights. In March, 1733, *Deborah* was firſt given to the public; and in April *Eſther* was again exhibited at the ſame theatre. It was during theſe early performances of Oratorios, that HANDEL firſt gratified the public by the performance of CONCERTOS ON THE ORGAN, a ſpecies of Muſic wholly of his own invention *(a)*, in which he uſually introduced an extempore fugue, a diapaſon-piece, or an adagio, manifeſting not only the wonderful fertility and readineſs of his invention, but the moſt perfect accuracy and neatneſs of execution *(b)*.

It was in the ſummer of 1733, that he went to the univerſity of Oxford, on occaſion of a public act, taking with him Careſtini, Strada, and his opera band: at this ſolemnity he had the Oratorio of *Athalia* performed in the public theatre, where he opened the organ in ſuch a manner as aſtoniſhed every hearer. The late Mr. Michael Chriſtian Feſting, and Dr. Arne, who were preſent, both aſſured me, that neither themſelves, nor any one elſe of their acquaintance, had ever before heard ſuch extempore, or ſuch premeditated playing, on that or any other inſtrument.

In the Lent of 1734, he performed *Eſther*, *Deborah*, and *Athalia*, at Covent-Garden; and in 1735, *Eſther*, *Acis and Galatea*, and *Alexander's Feaſt*, for the firſt time. In 1738, *Iſrael*

(a) Rameau's *Livre de Pieces de Clavecin en Concerts*, did not appear till 1741.

(b) The favourite movement, at the end of his ſecond organ-concerto, was long called the *Minuet in the Oratorio of Eſther*, from the circumſtance of its having been firſt heard in the concerto which he played between the parts of that Oratorio.

in

in Egypt, and 1739, *Allegro ed il Penſeroſo*. During theſe laſt two years the Opera-houſe was ſhut, and HANDEL's affairs were at this time ſo deranged, that he was under conſtant apprehenſions of being arreſted by Del Pò, the huſband of Strada. This ſtimulated his friends to perſuade him to have a benefit; and, in following their advice, he received ſuch teſtimonies of public favour at the Opera-houſe, in the Haymarket, March 28, 1738, as proved extremely lucrative: for, beſides every uſual part of the houſe being uncommonly crouded, when the curtain drew up, five hundred perſons of rank and faſhion were diſcovered on the ſtage, which was formed into an amphitheatre *(a)*.

In 1740, the Oratorio of *Saul* was performed, for the firſt time, at the theatre in Lincoln-Inn-Fields; and from this period, HANDEL may be ſaid to have devoted his labours ſolely to the ſervice of the church; as, except his *grand Concertos for Violins*, and the *Fire-work Muſic*, for the Peace of Aix la Chapelle, 1748; I remember no other compoſitions than Oratorios, that were eieither performed or publiſhed by him *(b)*.

During the firſt years of his retreat from the Opera ſtage, the profits ariſing from the performance of Oratorios were not ſufficient to indemnify his loſſes; and it would remain a perpetual

(a) This performance was called an *Oratorio*; but in examining the printed book of the words, with which I have been favoured by Mr. Belcher, one of HANDEL's few ſurviving friends, it appears that this exhibition was miſcellaneous; conſiſting of a mixture of ſacred and prophane, of Engliſh and Italian Airs and Recitatives, without the leaſt connection either in the words or muſic.

(b) From 1740, when he totally quitted the Opera-ſtage, to 1751, he produced fifteen original Oratorios, and adapted Engliſh words to the muſic of a ſerenata, or morality, *Il Trionfo del Tempo*, (the Triumph of Time and Truth) which he had ſet to Italian words, at Rome, 1709. Of theſe, the *Meſſiah*, *Samſon*, and *Judas Macchabæus*, were ſure to fill the houſe whenever they were performed; but though the reſt are hazardous, and fluctuating in favour, yet there is no one of them which an exquiſite and darling finger, ſuch as Mrs. Sherridan, or Mrs. Bates, could not render important and attractive.

ſtigma

ſtigma on the taſte of the nation, if it ſhould be recorded, that his MESSIAH, that truly noble and ſublime work, was not only ill-attended, but ill-received, on its firſt performance in 1741, were its miſcarriage not to be wholly aſcribed to the reſentment of the many great perſonages whom he had offended, in refuſing to compoſe for Seneſino, by whom he thought himſelf affronted; or even for the Opera, unleſs that ſinger were diſmiſſed; which inflexibility being conſtrued into inſolence, was the cauſe of powerful oppoſitions that were at once oppreſſive and mortifying.

HANDEL had been ſo unfortunate in all his attempts to carry on Operas at the three ſeveral theatres of the Haymarket, Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, and Covent-Garden, in oppoſition to his former protectors, the members of the Royal Academy, that he was reduced to the neceſſity of drawing out of the funds ten thouſand pounds, which he had lodged there in his more proſperous days; and ſtill Strada, Montagnana, and other ſingers employed in his laſt Operas were unpaid, and obliged to quit this country with promiſſory notes inſtead of caſh.

HANDEL, however, who was a man of ſtrict probity, and accuſtomed to pay his performers not only honeſtly, but generouſly, diſcharged theſe debts very honourably, as ſoon as he was able.

It was after theſe repeated miſcarriages, and a very ſevere illneſs, ſuppoſed to have been brought on by the joint effects of anxiety, mortification, diſtreſs, and diſappointment, that he went to Ireland, in order to try whether his Oratorios would be out of the reach of prejudice and enmity in that kingdom. Pope, on this occaſion perſonifying the Italian Opera, put into her mouth the following well-known lines, which ſhe addreſſes to the goddeſs of Dulneſs.

" Strong in new arms, lo! Giant HANDEL ſtands,
" Like bold Briareus, with his hundred hands;
" To ſtir, to rouſe, to ſhake the ſoul he comes,
" And Jove's own thunders follow Mars's drums.
" Arreſt him, empreſs; or you ſleep no more—
" She heard;—and drove him to the Hibernian ſhore *(a)*."

On his arrival at Dublin, with equal judgment and humanity, he began by performing the Meſſiah, for the benefit of the city priſon. This act of generoſity and benevolence met with univerſal approbation, as well as his Muſic; which, after ſpending ſome time in the diſcipline of his troops, was admirably performed, with Dubourg for leader, and the late Mrs. Cibber, to ſing, " *He was deſpiſed and rejected of Men.*" This air, the firſt, perhaps, in our language, has been often ſung by Italian ſingers of the greateſt abilities, but never, I believe, in a manner ſo truly touching to an Engliſhman, as by Mrs. Cibber, for whom it was originally compoſed; and whoſe voice, though a mere thread,

(a) When HANDEL went through Cheſter, in his way to Ireland, this year, 1741, I was at the Public-School in that city, and very well remember ſeeing him ſmoke a pipe, over a diſh of coffee, at the Exchange-Coffee-houſe; for being extremely curious to ſee ſo extraordinary a man, I watched him narrowly as long as he remained in Cheſter; which, on account of the wind being unfavourable for his embarking at Parkgate, was ſeveral days. During this time, he applied to Mr. Baker, the Organiſt, my firſt muſic-maſter, to know whether there were any choirmen in the cathedral who could ſing *at ſight*; as he wiſhed to prove ſome books that had been haſtily tranſcribed, by trying the choruſes which he intended to perform in Ireland. Mr. Baker mentioned ſome of the moſt likely ſingers then in Cheſter, and, among the reſt, a printer of the name of Janſon, who had a good baſe voice, and was one of the beſt muſicians in the choir. At this time Harry Alcock, a good player, was the firſt violin at Cheſter, which was then a very muſical place; for beſides public performances, Mr. Prebendary Preſcott had a weekly concert, at which he was able to muſter eighteen or twenty performers, gentlemen, and profeſſors. A time was fixed for this private rehearſal at the *Golden Falcon*, where HANDEL was quartered; but, alas! on trial of the chorus in the Meſſiah, " *And with his ſtripes we are healed,*"—Poor Janſon, after repeated attempts, failed ſo egregiouſly, that HANDEL let looſe his great bear upon him; and after ſwearing in four or five languages, cried out in broken Engliſh: " You ſhcauntrel! tit not you dell me " dat you could ſing at ſoite?"—" Yes, " ſir, ſays the printer, and ſo I can; but " not at *firſt ſight*."

and

and knowledge of Muſic, inconſiderable; yet, by a natural pathos, and perfect conception of the words, ſhe often penetrated the heart, when others, with infinitely greater voice and ſkill, could only reach the ear *(a)*.

HANDEL remained eight or nine months in Ireland, where he extended his fame, and began to repair his fortune. At his return to London, in the beginning of 1742, as he had relinquiſhed all thoughts of oppoſing the preſent managers of the Opera, former enmities began to ſubſide; and, when he recommenced his Oratorios at Covent-Garden, the Lent following, he found a general diſpoſition in the public to countenance and ſupport him. *Samſon* was the firſt he performed this year, which was not only much applauded by crouded houſes in the capital, but was ſoon diſſeminated, in ſingle ſongs, throughout the kingdom; and, indeed, it has ever been in the higheſt favour of all his Oratorios, except the MESSIAH, which this ſeaſon, to the honour of the public at large, and diſgrace of cabal and faction, was received with univerſal admiration and applauſe. And from that time to the preſent, this great work has been heard in all parts of the kingdom with increaſing reverence and delight; it has fed the hungry, clothed the naked, foſtered the orphan, and enriched ſucceeding managers of Oratorios, more than any ſingle muſical production in this or any country.

This *Sacred Oratorio*, as it was at firſt called, on account of the words being wholly compoſed of genuine texts of Scripture, ap-

(a) One night, while HANDEL was in Dublin, Dubourg having a ſolo part in a ſong, and a cloſe to make, *ad libitum*, he wandered about in different keys a great while, and ſeemed indeed a little bewildered, and uncertain of his original key . . . but, at length, coming to the ſhake, which was to terminate this long cloſe, HANDEL, to the great delight of the audience, and augmentation of applauſe, cried out loud enough to be heard in the moſt remote parts of the theatre: "You are welcome home, Mr. Du-"bourg!"

pearing to ſtand in ſuch high eſtimation with the public, HANDEL, actuated by motives of the pureſt benevolence and humanity, formed the laudable reſolution of performing it annually for the benefit of the Foundling Hoſpital, which reſolution was conſtantly put in practice, to the end of his life, under his own direction; and, long after, under that of Mr. Smith, and Mr. Stanley. In conſequence of theſe performances, the benefactions to the charity from the year 1749 to 1759, by eleven performances under HANDEL's own direction, amounted to - £.6935 0 0

From 1760 to 1768, by eight performances under the conduct of Mr. John Chriſtian Smith - 1332 0 0

From 1769 to 1777, nine performances under that that of Mr. Stanley - - - 2032 0 0

£.10,299 0 0

The organ in the chapel of this hoſpital was likewiſe a preſent from HANDEL; and he bequeathed, as a legacy to this charity, a fair copy of the original ſcore of the MESSIAH.

From the time of his quitting Ireland, with little oppoſition, and a few thin houſes, in conſequence of great aſſemblies of the nobility and gentry, manifeſtly and cruelly collected together on his nights of performance, with hoſtile intentions, by ſome implacable remains of his moſt powerful adverſaries, he continued his Oratorios till within a week of his death *(a)*.

But though the Oratorio of the MESSIAH increaſed in reputation every year, after his return from Ireland, and the crouds that

(a) The laſt ſeaſon of HANDEL's perſonal attendance and of his life was remarkably ſucceſsful. One of my friends, who was generally at the performance of each Oratorio that year, and who uſed to viſit him after it was over, in the treaſurer of the theatre's office, ſays, that the money he uſed to take to his carriage of a night, though in gold and ſilver, was as likely to weigh him down and throw him into a fever, as the copper-money of the painter Coreggio, if he had had as far to carry it.

flocked

flocked to the theatre were more conſiderable every time it was performed; yet, to ſome of his other Oratorios, the houſes were ſo thin, as not nearly to defray his expences; which, as he always employed a very numerous band, and paid his performers liberally, ſo deranged his affairs, that in the year 1745, after two performances of *Hercules*, January 5th and 12th, before the Lent ſeaſon, he ſtopped payment. He, however, reſumed the performance of his Oratorios of *Samſon*, *Saul*, *Joſeph*, *Belſhazzar*, and the *Meſſiah*, in March; but I perfectly remember, that none were well attended, except *Samſon*, and the MESSIAH *(a)*.

His late majeſty king George the Second, was a ſteady patron of HANDEL during theſe times, and conſtantly attended his Oratorios, when they were abandoned by the reſt of his court *(b)*.

HANDEL, late in life, like the great poets, Homer, and Milton, was afflicted with blindneſs; which, however it might diſpirit and embarraſs him at other times, had no effect on his nerves or intellects, in public: as he continued to play concertos and voluntaries between the parts of his Oratorios to the laſt, with the ſame vigour of thought and touch, for which he was ever ſo juſtly renowned. To ſee him, however, led to the organ,

(a) In 1749, *Theodora* was ſo very unfortunately abandoned, that he was glad if any profeſſors, who did not perform, would accept of tickets or orders for admiſſion. Two gentlemen of that deſcription, now living, having applied to HANDEL, after the diſgrace of *Theodora*, for an order to hear the MESSIAH, he cried out, "Oh your ſar-"vant, Mien-herren! you are tamnaple "tainty! you would not co to TEODORA— "der was room enough to tance dere, when "dat was perform."

Sometimes, however, I have heard him, as pleaſantly as philoſophically, conſole hi friends, when, previous to the curtain being drawn up, they have lamented that the houſe was ſo empty, by ſaying, "Nevre "moind; de mooſic vil ſound de petter."

(b) About this time a *bon mot* of lord Cheſterfield's was handed about by a nobleman, ſtill living, who going one night to the Oratorio at Covent-Garden, met his lordſhip coming out of the theatre. "What! my lord, are you diſmiſſed? Is "there no Oratorio to-night?" "Yes, ſays "his lordſhip, they are now performing; "but I thought it beſt to retire, leſt "I ſhould diſturb the king in his *pri-*"*vacies*."

after

after this calamity, at upwards of ſeventy years of age, and then conducted towards the audience to make his accuſtomed obeiſance, was a ſight ſo truly afflicting and deplorable to perſons of ſenſibility, as greatly diminiſhed their pleaſure, in hearing him perform.

During the Oratorio ſeaſon, I have been told, that he practiſed almoſt inceſſantly; and, indeed, that muſt have been the caſe, or his memory uncommonly retentive; for, after his blindneſs, he played ſeveral of his *old* organ-concertos, which muſt have been previouſly impreſſed on his memory by practice. At laſt, however, he rather choſe to truſt to his inventive powers, than thoſe of reminiſcence: for, giving the band only the ſkeleton, or ritornels of each movement, he played all the ſolo parts extempore, while the other inſtruments left him, *ad libitum*; waiting for the ſignal of a ſhake, before they played ſuch fragments of ſymphony as they found in their books.

Indeed, he not only continued to perform in public after he was afflicted with blindneſs, but to *compoſe* in private; for I have been aſſured, that the Duet and Chorus in *Judas Macchabæus*, of "*Sion now his head ſhall raiſe, Tune your harps to ſongs of* "*praiſe*," were dictated to Mr. Smith, by HANDEL, after the total privation of ſight. This compoſition, ſo late in life, and under ſuch depreſſing circumſtances, confirms an opinion of Dr. Johnſon, "that it ſeldom happens to men of powerful intellects "and original genius, to be robbed of mental vigour, by age; it "is only the feeble-minded and *fool-born* part of the creation, who "fall into that ſpecies of imbecility, which gives occaſion to ſay "that they are *ſuperannuated*: for theſe, when they retire late in "life from the world on which they have lived by retailing the "ſenſe of others, are inſtantly reduced to indigence of mind."

Dry-

Dryden, Newton, Dr. Johnſon himſelf, and our great Muſician, are admirable illuſtrations of this doctrine. Indeed, HANDEL not only exhibited great intellectual ability in the compoſition of this Duet and Chorus, but manifeſted his power of invention in extemporaneous flights of fancy to be as rich and rapid, a week before his deceaſe, as they had been for many years. He was always much diſturbed and agitated by the ſimilar circumſtances of *Samſon*, whenever the affecting air in that Oratorio of "*Total Eclipſe, no Sun, no Moon,*" &c. was performed.

The laſt Oratorio at which he attended, and performed, was on the 6th of April, and he expired on *Friday* the 13th, 1759, and *not on Saturday the 14th*, as was at firſt erroneouſly engraved on his Monument, and recorded in his Life; I have indiſputable authority for the contrary: as Dr. Warren, who attended HANDEL in his laſt ſickneſs, not only remembers his dying before midnight, on the 13th, but, that he was ſenſible of his approaching diſſolution; and having been always impreſſed with a profound reverence for the doctrines and duties of the Chriſtian religion, that he had moſt ſeriouſly and devoutly wiſhed, for ſeveral days before his death, that he might breathe his laſt on *Good-Friday*, "in hopes, he ſaid, of meeting his "Good God, his ſweet Lord and Saviour, on the day of his reſur-"rection," meaning the third day, or the Eaſter Sunday following.

The figure of HANDEL was large, and he was ſomewhat corpulent, and unwieldy in his motions; but his countenance, which I remember as perfectly as that of any man I ſaw but yeſterday, was full of fire and dignity; and ſuch as impreſſed ideas of ſuperiority and genius. He was impetuous, rough, and peremptory in his manners and converſation, but totally devoid of ill-nature or malevolence; indeed, there was an original humour and pleaſantry in his moſt lively ſallies of anger or impatience, which,

with

with his broken Engliſh, were extremely riſible. His natural propenſity to wit and humour, and happy manner of relating common occurrences, in an uncommon way, enabled him to throw perſons and things into very ridiculous attitudes. Had he been as great a maſter of the Engliſh language as Swift, his *bons mots* would have been as frequent, and ſomewhat of the ſame kind.

HANDEL, with many virtues, was addicted to no vice that was injurious to ſociety. Nature, indeed, required a great ſupply of ſuſtenance to ſupport ſo huge a maſs, and he was rather epicurean in the choice of it; but this ſeems to have been the only appetite he allowed himſelf to gratify *(a)*.

When

(a) The late Mr. Brown, leader of his majeſty's band, uſed to tell me ſeveral ſtories of HANDEL's love of good cheer, liquid and ſolid, as well as of his impatience. Of the former he gave an inſtance, which was accidentally diſcovered at his own houſe in Brook-ſtreet, where Brown, in the Oratorio ſeaſon, among other principal performers, was at dinner. During the repaſt, HANDEL often cried out—"Oh—I "have de taught;" when the company, unwilling that, out of civility to them, the public ſhould be robbed of any thing ſo valuable as his muſical ideas, begged he would retire and write them down; with which requeſt, however, he ſo frequently complied, that, at laſt, one of the moſt ſuſpicious had the ill-bred curioſity to peep through the key-hole into the adjoining room; where he perceived that *deſe taughts*, were only beſtowed on a freſh hamper of *Burgundy*, which, as was afterwards diſcovered, he had received in a preſent from his friend, the late lord Radnor, while his company was regaled with more generous and *ſpirited* port.

Another anecdote which I had from Brown, was the following: When the late reverend Mr. Felton found that his firſt organ concertos were well received, he opened a ſubſcription for a ſecond ſet, and begged of Brown to ſolicit Mr. HANDEL's permiſſion to inſert his name in the liſt. Brown, who had been in great favour with HANDEL the winter before, when he led his Oratorios, remembering how civilly he had been attended by him to the door, and how carefully cautioned, after being heated by a crouded room and hard labour, at the rehearſals in Brook-ſtreet, not to ſtir without a chair, had no doubt of his ſucceſs: but, upon mentioning to him Felton's requeſt, as delicately as poſſible, one morning when he was ſhaving, by telling him that he was a clergyman, who being about to publiſh ſome Concertos by ſubſcription, was extremely ambitious of the honour of his name and acceptance of a book, merely to grace his liſt, without involving him in any kind of expence; HANDEL, putting the barber's hand aſide, got up in a fury, and, with his face ſtill in a lather, cries out with great vehemence: "Tamn your ſeluſ, and go to der "teiffel—a barſon make Concerto! why "he no make ſarmon?" &c. In ſhort, Brown ſeeing him in ſuch a rage, with razors in his reach, got out of the room as faſt

When Pope found that his friends, lord Burlington and Dr. Arbuthnot, thought ſo highly of HANDEL, he not only laſhed his enemies in the Dunciad, but wiſhed to have his *Eurydice* ſet to Muſic by him. Mr. Belchier, a common friend, undertook to negotiate the buſineſs: but HANDEL having heard that Pope had made his Ode more lyrical, that is, fitter for Muſic, by dividing it into airs and recitatives, for Dr. Green, who had already ſet it; and whom, as a partizan for Bononcini, and confederate with his enemies, he had long diſliked, ſays, "It is de very ding vat my *pellows-plower* "has ſet already for ein tocktor's tecree at Cambridge *(a)*."

When Gluck came firſt into England, in 1745, he was neither ſo great a compoſer, nor ſo high in reputation, as he afterwards mounted; and I remember when Mrs. Cibber, in my hearing, aſked HANDEL what ſort of a compoſer he was; his anſwer, prefaced by an oath---was, "he knows no more of contrapunto, "as mein cook, Waltz."

But though he was ſo rough in his language, and in the habit of ſwearing, a vice then much more in faſhion than at preſent,

faſt as he could; leſt he ſhould have uſed them in a more *barbarous* way than would be ſafe. Indeed, he had a thorough contempt for all our compoſers at this time, from Dr. Green down to Harry Burgeſs; and performers on the organ too: for, after being long an inhabitant of this country, he uſed to ſay, "When I came hither "firſt, I found, among the Engliſh, many "good players, and no compoſers; but "now, they are all compoſers, and no "players."

(a) Dr. Green took his degree at that univerſity in 1730. Indeed, on HANDEL's firſt arrival in England, from Green's great admiration of this maſter's manner of playing, he had ſometimes literally condeſcended to become his *bellows-blower*, when he went to St. Paul's to play on that organ, for the exerciſe it afforded him, in the uſe of the pedals. HANDEL, after the three o'clock prayers, uſed frequently to get himſelf and young Green locked up in the church, together; and, in ſummer, often ſtript into his ſhirt, and played till eight or nine o'clock at night. Dr. Green, previous to his admiſſion into St. Paul's, as a choriſter, was taught to ſing by the late Mr. Charles King; he was afterwards bound apprentice to Brind, the organiſt of that cathedral, and was, at the time alluded to by HANDEL, either ſtill an apprentice, or, at leaſt, a very young man, and deputy to the organiſt, whom he afterwards ſucceeded.

he was truly pious, during the laſt years of his life, and conſtantly attended public prayers, twice a day, winter and ſummer, both in London and Tunbridge.

At the coronation of his late majeſty, George the Second, in 1727, HANDEL had words ſent to him, by the biſhops, for the anthems; at which he murmured, and took offence, as he thought it implied his ignorance of the Holy Scriptures: "I have read "my Bible very well, and ſhall chuſe for myſelf." And, indeed, his ſelection of the words, "*My heart is inditing of a good* "*matter*," was very judicious, and inſpired him with ſome of the fineſt thoughts that are to be found in all his works. This anthem was ſung at the coronation, while the peers were doing homage.

He knew the value of time too well to ſpend it in frivolous purſuits, or with futile companions, however high in rank. Fond of his art, and diligent in its cultivation, and the exerciſe of it, as a profeſſion, he ſpent ſo ſtudious and ſedentary a life, as ſeldom allowed him to mix in ſociety, or partake of public amuſements. Indeed, after my firſt arrival in London, 1744, he ſeldom was abſent from the benefit for Decayed Muſicians and their Families; and I have ſometimes ſeen him at the Playhouſes, the Opera, and at St. Martin's church, when the late Mr. Kelway played the organ. But thoſe who were more intimately acquainted with him than myſelf, ſay, that in his latter years, except when he went to pay his duty to the royal family at St. James's, or Leiceſter-Houſe, he ſeldom viſited the great, or was viſible, but at church, and the performance of his own Oratorios.

Beſides ſeeing HANDEL, myſelf, at his own houſe, in Brook-ſtreet, and at Carlton-Houſe, where he had rehearſals of his Oratorios, by meeting him at Mrs. Cibber's, and, at Fraſi's, who was then my ſcholar, I acquired conſiderable knowledge of his private character,

and

and turn for humour. He was very fond of Mrs. Cibber, whoſe voice and manners had ſoftened his ſeverity for her want of muſical knowledge. At her houſe, of a Sunday evening, he uſed to meet Quin, who, in ſpite of native roughneſs, was very fond of Muſic. Yet the firſt time Mrs. Cibber prevailed on HANDEL to ſit down to the harpſichord, while he was preſent, on which occaſion I remember the great Muſician played the overture in *Siroe*, and delighted us all with the marvellous neatneſs with which he played the jig, at the end of it.—Quin, after HANDEL was gone, being aſked by Mrs. Cibber, whether he did not think Mr. HANDEL had a charming hand? replied—" *a hand*, madam! you miſtake, it's a *foot*,"—" Poh! poh! ſays ſhe, has he not a fine finger?" " *Toes*, by G—, madam!"—Indeed, his hand was then ſo fat, that the knuckles, which uſually appear convex, were like thoſe of a child, dinted or dimpled in, ſo as to be rendered concave; however, his touch was ſo ſmooth, and the tone of the inſtrument ſo much cheriſhed, that his fingers ſeemed to grow to the keys. They were ſo curved and compact, when he played, that no motion, and ſcarcely the fingers themſelves, could be diſcovered.

At Fraſi's, I remember, in the year 1748, he brought, in his pocket, the duet of *Judas Macchabæus*, " *From theſe dread* " *Scenes*," in which ſhe had not ſung when that Oratorio was firſt performed, in 1746. At the time he ſat down to the harpſichord, to give her and me the time of it, while he ſung her part, I hummed, at ſight, the ſecond, over his ſhoulder; in which he encouraged me, by deſiring that I would ſing out—but, unfortunately, ſomething went wrong, and HANDEL, with his uſual impetuoſity, grew violent: a circumſtance very terrific to a young muſician.—At length, however, recovering from my fright, I ventured to ſay, that I fancied there was a miſtake in the writing; which, upon examining, HANDEL diſcovered to be the

caſe: and then, inſtantly, with the greateſt good humour and humility, ſaid, "I pec your barton—I am a very odd tog:—"maiſhter Schmitt is to plame."

When Frasi told him, that ſhe ſhould ſtudy hard, and was going to learn Thorough-Baſe, in order to accompany herſelf: HANDEL, who well knew how little this pleaſing ſinger was addicted to application and diligence, ſays, "Oh—vaat may we "not expect!"

HANDEL wore an enormous white wig, and, when things went well at the Oratorio, it had a certain nod, or vibration, which manifeſted his pleaſure and ſatisfaction. Without it, nice obſervers were certain that he was out of humour.

At the cloſe of an air, the voice with which he uſed to cry out, CHORUS! was extremely formidable indeed; and, at the rehearſals of his Oratorios, at Carleton-Houſe, if the prince and princeſs of Wales were not exact in coming into the Muſic-Room, he uſed to be very violent; yet, ſuch was the reverence with which his Royal Highneſs treated him, that, admitting HANDEL to have had cauſe of complaint, he has been heard to ſay, "Indeed, "it is cruel to have kept theſe poor people, meaning the per-"formers, ſo long from their ſcholars, and other concerns." But if the maids of honour, or any other female attendants, talked, during the performance, I fear that our modern Timotheus, not only ſwore, but called names; yet, at ſuch times, the princeſs of Wales, with her accuſtomed mildneſs and benignity, uſed to ſay, "Huſh! huſh! HANDEL's in a paſſion."

HANDEL was in the habit of talking to himſelf, ſo loud, that it was eaſy for perſons not very near him, to hear the ſubject of his ſoliloquies. He had, by much perſuaſion, received under his roof and protection, a boy, who had been repreſented, not only as having an uncommon diſpoſition for muſic, but for ſobriety and

diligence:

diligence: this boy, however, turned out ill, and ran away, no one, for a conſiderable time, knew whither. During this period, HANDEL walking in the Park, as he thought, alone, was heard to commune with himſelf in the following manner.—" Der tei-" fel! de fater vas deſheeved;—de mutter vas deſheeved;—but " I vas not deſheeved;—he is ein t—d ſhcauntrel—and coot for " nutting."

HANDEL's general look was ſomewhat heavy and ſour; but when he *did* ſmile, it was his ſire the ſun, burſting out of a black cloud. There was a ſudden flaſh of intelligence, wit, and good humour, beaming in his countenance, which I hardly ever ſaw in any other.

It has been ſaid of him, that, out of his profeſſion, he was ignorant and dull; but though I do not admit the fact, yet, if the charge were as true as it is ſevere, it muſt be allowed, in extenuation, that to poſſeſs a difficult art in the perfect manner he did, and to be poſſeſſed by it, ſeems a natural conſequence; and all that the public had a right to expect, as he pretended to nothing more. Accompliſhments can only amuſe our private friends, and ourſelves, in leiſure hours; but ſo occupied and abſorbed was HANDEL, by the ſtudy and exerciſe of his profeſſion, that he had little time to beſtow, either on private amuſements, or the cultivation of friendſhip. Indeed, the credit and reverence ariſing from theſe, had HANDEL poſſeſſed them, would have been tranſient, and confined to his own age and acquaintance; whereas the fame acquired by ſilent and cloſe application to his profeſſional buſineſs,

——*Nec Jovis ira, nec ignes,*
Nec poterit ferrum, nec edax abolere vetuſtas.

And

And it is probable, that his name, like that of many of his brethren, will long ſurvive his works. The moſt learned man can give us no information concerning either the private life or compoſitions of Orpheus, Amphion, Linus, Olympus, Terpander, or Timotheus, yet every ſchool-boy can tell us, that they were *great Muſicians*, the delight of their ſeveral ages, and, many years after, of poſterity.

Though totally free from the ſordid vices of meanneſs and avarice, and poſſeſſed of their oppoſite virtues, charity and generoſity, in ſpite of temporary adverſity, powerful enemies, and frequent maladies of body, which ſometimes extended to intellect, HANDEL died worth upwards of Twenty Thouſand Pounds; which, except One Thouſand to the Fund for decayed Muſicians and their Families, he chiefly bequeathed to his relations on the continent.

His funeral was not public, like that of Rameau, in France; of Jomelli, in Italy; or of our Dryden, and Garrick, in England; yet, when he was buried in Weſtminſter-Abbey, April the 20th, 1759, the dean, Dr. Pearce, biſhop of Rocheſter, aſſiſted by the choir, performed the funeral ſolemnity. More general and national teſtimonies of regard were left to the preſent period, when all enmities, jealouſies, and operations of envy were ſubſided; and when time, examination, and reflexion, had given new charms and importance to his works. And this pleaſing taſk has been performed in a way ſo ample, magnificent, and honourable, that it will be difficult to find, either in ancient or modern hiſtory, a more liberal and ſplendid example of gratitude to a deceaſed artiſt, in any other country.

CHARACTER of HANDEL as a COMPOSER.

THAT HANDEL was ſuperior in the ſtrength and boldneſs of his ſtyle, the richneſs of his harmony, and complication of parts, to every compoſer who has been moſt admired for ſuch excellencies, cannot be diſputed. And, while *fugue*, *contrivance*, and a *full ſcore*, were more generally reverenced than at preſent, he remained wholly unrivalled.

I know it has been ſaid that HANDEL was not the original and immediate inventor of ſeveral ſpecies of Muſic, for which his name has been celebrated; but, with reſpect to ORIGINALITY, it is a term to which proper limits ſhould be ſet, before it is applied to the productions of any artiſt. Every *invention* is clumſy in its beginning, and Shakſpeare was not the firſt writer of *Plays*, or Corelli the firſt compoſer of *violin Solos*, *Sonatas*, and *Concertos*, though thoſe which he produced are the beſt of his time; nor was Milton the inventor of *Epic Poetry*. The ſcale, harmony, and cadence of Muſic, being ſettled, it is impoſſible for any compoſer to invent a GENUS of compoſition that is *wholly and rigorouſly new*, any more than for a poet to form a *language*, *idiom*, *and phraſeology*, for himſelf. All that the greateſt and boldeſt muſical inventor *can* do, is to avail himſelf of the beſt effuſions, combinations, and effects, of his predeceſſors; to arrange and apply them in a new manner; and to add, from his own ſource, whatever he can draw, that is grand, graceful, gay, pathetic, or, in any other way, pleaſing. This HANDEL did, in a moſt ample and ſuperior manner; being poſſeſſed, in his middle age and full vigour, of every refinement and perfection of his time: uniting the depth and elaborate contrivance of his own country, with Italian ele-

gance and facility; as he ſeems, while he reſided ſouth of the Alps, to have liſtened attentively in the church, theatre, and chamber, to the moſt exquiſite compoſitions and performers, of every kind, that were then exiſting.

And though we had CANTATAS by Cariſſimi, Aleſſandro Scarlatti, Gaſparini, and Marcello; DUETS by Steffani and Clari; VOCAL CHORUSES, without inſtrumental accompaniments, by Paleſtrina, and our own Tallis, Bird, and Purcell; and, with accompaniments, by Cariſſimi, as well as Paolo Colonna; with VIOLIN SONATAS and CONCERTOS by Corelli and Geminiani; yet it may with the utmoſt truth be aſſerted, that HANDEL added conſiderable beauties to whatever ſtyle or ſpecies of compoſition he adopted, which, in a larger work, it would not be difficult to demonſtrate, by examples. At preſent, I ſhall only venture to give it as part of my muſical *profeſſion de foi*, that his *air* or *melody* is greatly ſuperior to any that can be found in the otherwiſe charming Cantatas which Cariſſimi ſeems to have invented; that he is more natural in his voice-parts, and has given more *movement to his baſes* than Aleſ. Scarlatti; that he has more *force* and *originality* than Gaſparini or Marcello; that his *chamber duets* are, at leaſt, equal to thoſe of Steffani and Clari, who were remarkable for no other ſpecies of compoſition; and though the late Dr. Boyce uſed to ſay that HANDEL had great obligations to Colonna for his CHORUSES *with inſtrumental accompaniments*, it ſeems indiſputable that ſuch choruſes were infinitely more obliged to HANDEL than he to Colonna, or, indeed, than they were to all the Compoſers that have ever exiſted. It is my belief, likewiſe, that the beſt of his *Italian Opera Songs* ſurpaſs, in variety of ſtyle and ingenuity of accompaniment, thoſe of all preceding and cotemporary Compoſers throughout Europe; that he has more *fire*,

in

in his compoſitions for violins, than Corelli, and more *rhythm* than Geminiani; that in his full, maſterly, and excellent *organ-fugues*, upon the moſt natural and pleaſing ſubjects, he has ſurpaſſed Freſcobaldi, and even Sebaſtian Bach, and others of his countrymen, the moſt renowned for abilities in this difficult and elaborate ſpecies of compoſition; and, laſtly, that all the judicious and unprejudiced Muſicians of every country, upon hearing or peruſing his noble, majeſtic, and frequently ſublime FULL ANTHEMS, and ORATORIO CHORUSES, muſt allow, with readineſs and rapture, that they are utterly unacquainted with any thing equal to them, among the works of the greateſt maſters that have exiſted ſince the invention of counterpoint.

CHRONOLOGICAL LIST

OF

HANDEL'S WORKS.

ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPTS in the Poſſeſſion of his MAJESTY:

Amounting to Eighty-two Volumes.

OPERAS.

RODRIGO, performed at Florence 1709
AGRIPPINA - Venice 1709
RADAMISTO - London 1720
MUZIO SCEVOLA —— 1721
OTTONE - - —— 1722
GIULIO CESARE, FLORIDANTE, FLAVIO —— 1723
TAMERLANO —— 1724
RODELINDA - —— 1725
ALESSANDRO, SCIPIONE —— 1726
RICARDO PRIMO —— 1727
TOLOMEO, SIROE —— 1728
LOTARIO - London 1729
PARTENOPE - —— 1730
PORO - - —— 1731
ORLANDO, SOSARME —— 1732
ARIANNA, EZIO - —— 1733
ARIODANTE - —— 1734
ALCINA - —— 1735
ARMINIO, ATALANTA, GIUSTINO —— 1736
BERENICE, FARAMONDO —— 1737
SERSE - —— 1738
IMENEO, DEIDAMIA —— 1740

ORATORIOS.

ESTHER, compoſed 1720, publickly performed in London 1732

DE-

DEBORAH ——
ATHALIA Oxford } 1733
ACIS and GALATEA, at Cannons, 1721, publickly performed in London 1735
ALEXANDER'S FEAST — 1735
ST. CECILIA'S ODE —— 1736
ISRAEL IN EGYPT —— 1738
L'ALLEGRO ED IL PENSEROSO - - —— 1739
SAUL - - —— 1740
MESSIAH - —— 1741
SAMSON - —— 1742
SEMELE - }
BELSHAZZAR } —— 1743
SUSANNA }
HERCULES - —— 1744
OCCASIONAL ORATORIO —— 1745
JOSEPH - }
JUDAS MACCHABÆUS - } —— 1746
JOSHUA - }
ALEXANDER BALUS - - } —— 1747
SOLOMON - —— 1749
THEODORA - London 1750
JEPHTHA - —— 1751

MISCELLANEOUS WORKS.

ANTHEMS, 8 vols.
CANTATAS, 4 vols.
TE DEUMS and JUBILATE, 3 vols.
OPERA SONGS, 2 vols.
LAUDATE.
COLLECTION OF SONGS AND CHORUSES.
MOTETTI è DUETTI.
IL TRIONFO DEL TEMPO - } Rome 1709 London 1737
ACIGE E GALATEA - Napoli 1709
ORATORIO ITALIANO.
CANTATE.
CONCERTI.
CONCERTI GROSSI.
Tranſcript of VI SONATAS for two Hautbois and a Baſe - - 1694

Not in HIS MAJESTY'S Collection.

ALMIRA, an Opera, performed at Hamburgh } 1705
NERO - - - - ——
FLORINDO } —— 1708
DAFNE }
RINALDO - London 1711
TESEO - }
PASTOR FIDO } —— 1712
AMADIGE - —— 1715
AMMETO - —— 1727

ALES-

ALESSANDRO SEVERO, PASTICCIO —— 1737
PARNASSO IN FESTA - - —— 1740
WATER-MUSIC —— 1716
FIRE-WORK MUSIC —— 1748
TRIUMPH OF TIME AND TRUTH - —— 1751
CHOICE OF HERCULES —— 1745
SONATAS for two Violins and a Baſe, two ſets.
HARPSICHORD LESSONS, Two Books: the firſt appeared in - 1720
FUGUES for the Organ.
ORGAN CONCERTOS, Three Sets.
CANTATAS, compoſed at Hamburgh, between 1703 and 1709
DITTO at Rome, 1709 and 1710

The late Mr. Walſh, of Catharine-ſtreet, in the Strand, purchaſed of HANDEL, for publication, tranſcripts of the Manuſcript ſcores of almoſt all the works he had compoſed in England; and Mr. Wright, of the ſame place, ſucceſſor to Mr. Walſh, is ſtill in poſſeſſion of theſe Manuſcripts, many of which have never yet been publiſhed. Little more than the favourite ſongs of his Italian Operas, and thoſe incorrectly, and in different forms, have, as yet, been printed. Of his Oratorios, beſides the favourite Airs in all of them, Mr. Walſh's ſucceſſors have publiſhed complete and uniform Scores of the MESSIAH, JUDAS MACCHABÆUS, SAMSON, JEPHTHA, ISRAEL IN EGYPT, JOSHUA, SAUL, ESTHER, CHOICE OF HERCULES, L'ALLEGRO ED IL PENSEROSO, DRYDEN'S ODE, ALEXANDER'S FEAST, ACIS AND GALATEA, BELSHAZZAR, SUSANNA, THE OCCASIONAL ORATORIO, and DEBORAH.

Beſides theſe, and his four CORONATION ANTHEMS, FUNERAL ANTHEMS, GRAND TE DEUM, JUBILATE, and DETTINGEN TE DEUM, complete Scores of HANDEL'S TEN ANTHEMS, for voices and inſtruments, compoſed chiefly for the duke

duke of Chandos, at Cannons, have been publiſhed by Mr. Wright, in three volumes. The ſame publiſher is ſtill in poſſeſſion of many of his inedited Works: as Italian Duets, Cantatas, Songs, Anthems, Sonatas, ſome for violins, and ſome for German flutes and a baſe, with ſeveral other miſcellaneous productions.

In the collection of the earl of Aylesford, formed by the late Mr. Jennings; and in that of Sir Watkin Williams Wynn, are preſerved in MS. many valuable works of our author, as:

A CONCERTO for French Horns and Side Drum, with the March in JUDAS MACCHABÆUS.

Ditto for Trumpets and Horns.

Three CONCERTOS in Alexander's Feaſt.

ORATORIO *della Paſſione*.

Ditto *Della Reſurrezione*.

TE DEUM, compoſed on the Arrival of Queen Caroline.

Ditto in B♭ for the Duke of Chandos.

Ditto in A, major 3^{d}.

DANCES in *Ariadne*, *Ariodante*, and *Paſtor Fido*.

Several Harpſichord Leſſons, not printed, ſome of them for the Princeſs Louiſa.

Sir Watkin Williams Wynn, beſides the printed OPERAS, ORATORIOS, and TE DEUMS, of HANDEL, is in poſſeſſion of the following Manuſcript Scores: TE DEUM in A, and the ANTHEM, *Let God ariſe*, both tranſpoſed and altered, for the King's Chapel.

I will magnify thee, compiled and altered, from ſeveral Anthems, for the Sons of the Clergy, at St. Paul's.

As pants the hart, for five voices; with ſeveral alterations and additions, by HANDEL himſelf, when it was introduced in the Oratorio of ESTHER.

The

The king ſhall rejoice. Performed at the Chapel-Royal, on the victory obtained at Dettingen.

Sing unto God. Performed at the nuptials of their late Royal Highneſſes, the prince and princeſs of Wales, 1736.

Bleſſed are they: partly compoſed, and partly compiled, for the Foundling Hoſpital.

Let God ariſe, } Adapted to voices, without inſtruments,
As pants the hart. } for the Chapel Royal.

ODE, or SERENATA, compoſed for the birth-day of queen Anne.

And in the Collection of the late Barnard Granville, of Calwich, in Staffordſhire, Eſq. among 38 MS. folio volumes of HANDEL's works in Score, conſiſting of ſixteen OPERAS, eleven ORATORIOS, 4 vols. of ANTHEMS, 1 of CANTATAS, others of TE DEUMS, CONCERTOS, and Miſcellaneous Pieces, there are Scores of the Operas of RINALDO, TESEO, AMADIGE, and AMMETO, with 2 vols. of Duets, and one of Single Songs in Eight Parts.

HIS MAJESTY, and the Directors of the CONCERT OF ANCIENT MUSIC, as well as many other admirers of the productions of HANDEL, having expreſſed a wiſh that a uniform and complete edition of all his various works, vocal and inſtrumental, might be engraved, in ſcore; I ſhall give a place here to the following Propoſals, which were publiſhed laſt year, and which every profeſſor, as well as judge and lover of Muſic, muſt ſincerely wiſh may be carried into execution, not only for the advancement of the art, but for the honour of this great Muſician, and of our Country.

June

June 22, 1783.

HANDEL'S MUSIC.

PROPOSALS

For PRINTING by SUBSCRIPTION,

By R. BIRCHALL,

(From the late Mr. RANDALL's *Catherine-ſtreet*)
No. 129, NEW BOND-STREET.

COMPLETE SCORES of all the Compoſitions of G. F. HANDEL, not hitherto perfected; Conſiſting of ITALIAN OPERAS, ORATORIOS; a Number of ANTHEMS, TE DEUMS, CANTATAS and TRIOS (for Voices,) with other MISCELLANEOUS WORKS; alſo his INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC, the whole of which is computed to make about Eighty Folio Volumes, containing one with another, near One Hundred and Fifty Pages each.

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VI. That, as many Diſappointments have happened to Publiſhers of ſuch Works, from Subſcribers changing the Places of their Abode, &c. and, as it would be imprudent, in the preſent Publiſhers, to engage in this weighty Undertaking on an Uncertainty; it is humbly hoped, that ſuch Noblemen, and Gentlemen, as wiſh to encourage it, will authorize their Bankers, or Agents in London, to be anſwerable for the Subſcription Money, and to pay the ſame, as above ſtipulated, as well as to receive the Books.

SUBSCRIPTIONS received by BIRCHALL, at his Muſic-Shop, No. 129, NEW BOND-STREET, LONDON.

ADDENDA

TO THE

PREFACE OF THE COMMEMORATION ACCOUNT.

Page xi.

SINCE the Preface was printed, in which mention is made of the principal Muſical Performances of uncommon magnitude in other parts of Europe, anterior to the late Commemoration, I have been informed, that ſoon after my tour to Vienna, in 1772, a great Muſical Inſtitution had been eſtabliſhed in that city for the Support of the Widows of deceaſed Muſicians, ſomewhat reſembling our Muſical Fund. As this eſtabliſhment has lately been mentioned in an anonymous book of Letters on the German Nation, written in the language of that country *(a)*, and is ſaid to have been productive of very extraordinary Muſical Exhibitions, both with reſpect to the number of performers and accuracy of execution; in order to obtain as authentic an account of them as poſſible, I did myſelf the honour of waiting upon his Excellency Count Kageneck, the Imperial Envoy extraordinary and Miniſter plenipotentiary at our court, by whom, after a full explanation of the ſubject of my enquiries, I was deſired to write down my queſtions, with a promiſe that they ſhould be accurately anſwered by the Count's ſecretary, M. Schild, who is not only a native of Vienna, but a good Compoſer, and practical Muſician.

At the time I preſented this gentleman with my queries, in writing, I had likewiſe the advantage of converſing with him on the ſubject of Muſical Eſtabliſhments at Vienna; and was ſoon after favoured with ample anſwers to my queſtions; of which, the following is the ſubſtance *(b)*.

(*a*) Briefe eines Reiſenden Franzoſen über Deutſchland an Seinen Bruder zu Paris. 2 vols. 8vo. 1783.

(*b*) The queſtions were written in French, and anſwered in that language.

That

" That the Performances for the Benefit of Muſicians Widows " at Vienna have been eſtabliſhed about twelve years.

" That they conſiſt of a kind of *Concert Spirituel*, or *Oratorio*, " executed in the great national theatre twice a year: in Advent " and Lent, by about three hundred and ſeventy vocal and inſtru- " mental performers; and if there is an overflow of company, " which ſometimes happens, the performance at each of theſe ſea- " ſons is repeated. The compoſitions choſen on theſe occaſions are " not always the ſame; but Oratorios by Haſſe, Gluck, Haydn, " Ditters, Starzer, Salieri, and others; and ſometimes by an- " cient German maſters: as HANDEL, Bach, Graun, and Rolle.

" And that the ſum raiſed at theſe performances annually " amounts to about £500. each time."

On St. *Cecilia's-Day*, there is likewiſe a grand Muſical Performance at St. Stephen's Cathedral, the Metropolitan Church, at which, beſides the performers on the Choir eſtabliſhment, all the moſt eminent foreigners, as well as natives in Vienna at the time, are ambitious to aſſiſt. The great Maſs, or Choral Muſic, is uſually of the compoſition of the preſent Maeſtro di Capella, Hoffmann, or of Reuter, Caldara, or Fuchs. This performance, as well as that of the Veſpers, on the eve of St. Cecilia, is leſs remarkable for the number of hands and voices, which amount only to about a hundred, than for the excellence of the compoſition and talents of the ſeveral Muſicians who exert themſelves on the occaſion; and who, between the different parts of the ſervice, perform Concertos, with ſolo parts, to diſplay their powers on their ſeveral inſtruments *(a)*.

(*a*) Further particulars of theſe Muſical Eſtabliſhments will be given in the laſt volume of *the General Hiſtory of Muſic*, by the author of this account.

ADDENDA to LIFE of HANDEL.

(Page 10, after the 3d Period.)

IN the year 1718, when there ſeem to have been no Operas in England, Nicolini having quitted this country, was engaged at Naples, where HANDEL's RINALDO was brought on the ſtage, under the direction of the celebrated Leo, then a young man.

P. 16, after Note *(a)*.

Mattheſon, in his book called the *Triumphal Arch*, mentions a circumſtance concerning HANDEL, which is but little known in England. He ſays, that "in 1717, he was at Hanover with "his Royal and Electoral Highneſs, afterwards king George the "Second, to whom he had been juſt appointed maeſtro di ca-"pella." And as no Operas or other compoſitions appear in the liſt of his works, between the Opera of *Amadige*, 1715, and *Radamiſto*, 1720, his attendance at the court of Hanover will help to fill up that chaſm. Mattheſon, who ſeems to have kept an exact record of the chief muſical tranſactions of his time, particularly thoſe which concern his intercourſe with HANDEL, tells us, that he received letters from him that were written at Hanover, in 1717, concerning his dedicating to him, and other great maſters, a work of his own, called the *Orcheſtra*, Part II. and in 1719, other letters from London, on the ſame ſubject.

Mattheſon, in his Ehren Pforte, p. 96, ſpeaks likewiſe of an Opera, ſet by HANDEL called *Oriana*, and performed at Hamburgh, 1717; and of *Judith*, an Oratorio, 1732, of which nothing

thing is known in England. He likewiſe mentions, in the ſame work, a Compoſition *for Paſſion-Week*, of which the words were written by Brockes of Hamburgh. He ſays it was compoſed by HANDEL in England, 1719, and ſent to that city, by poſt, in a very ſmall ſcore; but gives it no other name than a *Paſſione*.

Tradition has preſerved ſo many anecdotes concerning the performance of HANDEL at Hamburgh, that many muſical people there, who came into the world too late to hear him, think they have lived in vain, and his works have at all times been in the higheſt favour in that city, where he began his career; for, beſides the Operas already mentioned, which he compoſed expreſsly for the theatre in Hamburgh, at the beginning of this century, before he viſited Italy, his *Rinaldo* was performed there in 1715; *Oriana*, 1717; *Agrippina*, 1718; *Zenobia*, 1721; *Mutius Scævola*, and *Floridantes*, 1723; *Tamerlano*, *Giulio Ceſare*, and *Ottone*, 1725; *Ricardo Primo*, 1729; *Ammeto*, 1730; *Cleoſida*, or *Poro*, and *Judith*, an Oratorio, 1732; and, laſtly, *Rodelinda*, 1734, were all ſent to Hamburgh from other places, and performed there in the abſence of the compoſer.

Though ſome of his later Operas were performed on that ſtage, in Italian, yet the four firſt were ſet and ſung in the German language; and others, after being performed in Italian, in London, were tranſlated, altered, and totally changed for the Hamburgh ſtage, according to circumſtances. Upon the whole, it appears, that nineteen or twenty of his Dramatic works had been performed there before the year 1740, when the *Triumphal Arch* was publiſhed.

While Mattheſon was collecting materials for this work, he applied to HANDEL himſelf for an account of his Life and productions, which he promiſed to furniſh; but, ſays Mattheſon, "I am ſorry to ſay that it remains ſtill to be done."

In

In 1745, *Le Sécretaire des Commandemens de ſa Majeſté Britannique*, as Mattheſon ſometimes ſtyles himſelf, dedicated to HANDEL what he calls *the well-ſounding finger-language* (**Die wol-klingende finger-ſprache**) by which he means a book of 12 fugues for the organ, on two and three ſubjects; and received from him the following letter.

Monſieur, *à Londres, ce 29 de Juillet,* 1735.

IL y a quelque tems, que j'ai reçue une de vos obligeantes lettres; mais à preſent je viens de recevoir votre derniere, avec votre ouvrage.

Je vous en remercie, Monſieur, et je vous aſſure qui j'ai toute l'eſtime pour votre merite: je ſouhaiterois ſeulement, que mes circonſtances m'étoient plus favorables, *pour vous donner des marques de mon inclination pour vous ſervir. L'ouvrage eſt digne de l'attention des connoiſſeurs, & quant à moi, je vous rend juſtice.*

Au reſte, pour rammaſſer quelque epoque, il m'eſt impoſſible, puiſqu' une continuelle application au ſervice de cette cour & nobleſſe me detourne de toute autre affaire.

Je ſuis avec une conſideration trés parfaite, &c.

SIR, London, July 29, 1735.

IT is a conſiderable time ſince I received your firſt obliging letter; and now I am favoured with a ſecond, accompanied by your work.

I thank you for it, Sir; and aſſure you that I have a ſincere eſteem for your merit: I only wiſh *that I was in more favourable circumſtances* for manifeſting my inclination to ſerve you. The work is well worthy the attention of the curious; and for my own part, I am always ready to do you juſtice.

As for drawing up memoirs concerning myſelf, I find it utterly impoſſible, on account of my being continually occupied in the ſervice of the court and nobility, which puts it out of my power to think of any thing elſe. I am with perfect regard, *&c.*

" Since

" Since which time, ſays Mattheſon, till 1739, when the " court and firſt nobility, and, indeed, the whole nation, were " more attentive to a ruinous war, than to places of public enter- " tainment, this could be no excuſe. I therefore repeated my " requeſt, inforced by all the arguments I could deviſe, but ſtill " to no purpoſe."

In ſpeaking of HANDEL's works at this time (1740), Mattheſon ſays, " he compoſed from his own knowledge and re- " ſources;" and ſpeaks of ſeveral Anthems and choral compoſi- tions, particularly of his *Grand Te Deum*, not knowing that it was already printed. " His 8 *Pieces de Clavecin*, ſays he, were " engraved on copper in 1720, and ſince that, a ſecond ſet, " which are very fine; but to acquire the poſſeſſion of theſe and " his other great works, I have been prevented by their high " price. However, I ſeem, continues he, to have had ſome " claims upon a man to whom, in his feeble beginnings, I ma- " nifeſted much kindneſs, and afterwards ſhewed him great reſpect " in the eulogiums I beſtowed on him in my writings, as well as " in dedicating my works to him, at no inconſiderable expence. " And if he had thought *me* unworthy of ſuch confidence, the " muſical public, at leaſt, who adored him, merited ſuch a mark " of reſpect. We were early companions at the Opera, in our " ſtudies and performance, at the table, and in our rambles. " *We took ſweet counſel together, and walked in the houſe of God* " *as friends.*"

Mattheſon ſeems to have been very imperfectly acquainted with the muſical tranſactions of England at this time, as well as of the ſituation of poor HANDEL's affairs; who, oppoſed, perſecuted, impoveriſhed, and, by extreme agitation and anxiety, injured both in health and intellects, was ſo far from being able to patronize his

his old acquaintance and competitor, that he ſtood in great need of patronage himſelf; and indeed, he was, perhaps, ſtill leſs able to undertake a retroſpect ſcrutiny and examination of his own life and circumſtances; for, being naturally proud, and neither ignorant of his own powers, nor inſenſible to dignity of character, this was by no means a favourable time for ſelf-examination. It is chiefly in moments of proſperity, happineſs, or vanity, that men can have much pleaſure in thinking or talking about themſelves; and as HANDEL was unfortunate, unhappy, and "too "proud to be vain," a requeſt that he would become his own biographer was not likely to be granted.

Mattheſon, on the contrary, was ſo far from having a repugnance to ſuch a humiliating employment, that he not only furniſhed all the articles concerning himſelf that were printed in Walther, Marpurg, and other cotemporary muſical writers, but was continually blazoning his abilities and importance in his own works. The truth is, that his authority for the praiſe he beſtows on others is never ſuſpected, as it is given unwillingly; ſo that he ſtill continues to be cited by his countrymen as an author of knowledge and veracity. And his tranſlation and critical remarks on the Life of HANDEL are ſtill referred to, as claſſical.

However, Mattheſon, though he found himſelf the dupe of unreaſonable expectation, concludes his account of him in his *Triumphal Arch*, by telling his countrymen that HANDEL had been offered a Doctor's degree in Muſic at the univerſity of Oxford, which he had declined; but that a marble ſtatue had been erected to him in Vauxhall Gardens, an honour ſeldom conferred on living artiſts in modern times; and concludes by ſaying, that "no one can praiſe our famous HANDEL more than I myſelf "have done, in my muſical writings; particularly in my *Muſica*

"*Critica*,

" *Critica*, 1722; *Muſical Patriot*, 1728; *Kernel of Melodious* " *Science*, 1737; and *Perfect Chapel-Maſter*, 1739." Indeed, there are no muſical writers in the German language whoſe works have come to my hands, that do not mention HANDEL with great reverence.

Walther, in his Muſical Lexicon, 1732, ſtyles him " a very " celebrated maeſtro di capella, then in England;" and gives a liſt of his Operas which had been performed at Hamburgh.

Quantz, the late celebrated maſter to the king of Pruſſia on the German flute, in his own Life, written by himſelf, ſpeaking of the ſtate of Muſic in England when he was there, 1727, ſays, that the greateſt performer then on the harpſichord and organ in London, was HANDEL; on the violin, Geminiani; on the hautbois, Martini; and on the flute, Weideman. HANDEL's orcheſtra at the Opera, he ſays, was uncommonly powerful; and the baſes in his compoſitions were ſuperior to the trebles in thoſe of Bononcini.

Scheiben, in his *Critical Muſician*, publiſhed at Leipſig, 1745, ſays, that though Kuhnau and Keiſer were very great muſicians, they were obliged to give way to HANDEL and *Telemann*. HANDEL, though he often worked upon his own materials, yet diſdained not to uſe the thoughts of others; particularly thoſe of Reinhard Keiſer. And in all his works he diſcovered great intelligence in his art, and the utmoſt purity of harmony, and ſimplicity of melody.

Marpurg, in his Treatiſe on the Art of Fugue, 1756, calls him a claſſical Compoſer, no leſs renowned for his Church-Muſic, full of admirable fugues, than for his theatrical productions, beautiful overtures, organ fugues, harpſichord leſſons, and a moſt ſublime manner of playing the organ. This author, in his

Critical Letters on Muſic, Berlin, 1760, ſpeaks of the fugue in the ſecond Overture of *Admetus*, as a compoſition that he can never hear without emotion. Indeed, HANDEL has manifeſted wonderful abilities in that fugue, by inverting a very curious and difficult ſubject, in all the anſwers.

Hiller, of Leipſic, in his *Weekly Muſical Journal*, 1767, where he gives a liſt of HANDEL's Operas performed in England, ſpeaks of his genius and abilities with feeling and intelligence; and an idea may be formed of the veneration in which he is ſtill held at Hamburgh, by the following particulars.

M. Schuback, ſyndic of Hamburgh, a reſpectable magiſtrate and able muſician, has employed, according to his own account, all his leiſure hours, during almoſt forty years, in the ſtudy and imitation of his great countryman, HANDEL *(a)*. And this ingenious *Amateur* has compoſed, and publiſhed an Oratorio, called *The Diſciples at Emmaus*, profeſſedly in the ſtyle of HANDEL *(b)*.

(a) In 1779, I was honoured with a letter from M. Schuback, in which is inſerted the following eloge of our favourite compoſer: *Vous trouverez à ce que j'eſpere, que je ſuis imitateur, foible à la verité, mais zelé pourtant, du fameux* HANDEL. *Ce grand homme me paroit toujours le premier compoſiteur qui fut jamais, et il y a près de 40 ans que je tache de ſuivre ſes traces; ce que je ſcaurois prouver par une quantité d'ouvrage, trop grandes, je le confeſſe, pour un homme qui étant employé aux ſervices de l'état, n'a qu'à derober quelques heures, pour ſatisfaire à l'envie dont il eſt chatouillé de primer ſur les maitres de chapelle.*——In another letter M. Schuback tells me, that in 1777, HANDEL's *Te Deum*, *Meſſiah*, and *Alexander's Feaſt*, were performed at Hamburgh, under his direction, for the benefit of the poor.

(b) This Oratorio may be had, in ſcore, with German or Engliſh words, of Mr. Napier, at his Muſic-ſhop, in the Strand, N° 474. It was wholly compoſed for tenor and baſe voices, on account of an irreconcileable quarrel, for precedence, which happened among the female ſingers at Hamburgh, 1778.

COMMEMORATION

OF

HANDEL.

INTRODUCTION.

HOW this great idea was generated, cheriſhed, and matured, will, probably, be a matter of curioſity to the public, as well as the manner in which it was executed. And having had the honour of attending many of the meetings of the Directors and Conductor, while the neceſſary arrangements were under conſideration, as well as opportunities of converſing with them, ſince, I ſhall ſtate the principal facts as accurately as poſſible, from ſuch authentic information as theſe favourable circumſtances have furniſhed.

In a converſation between lord viſcount Fitzwilliam, ſir Watkin Williams Wynn, and Joah Bates, eſquire, commiſſioner of the Victualling-Office, the beginning of laſt year, 1783, at the houſe of the latter, after remarking that the number of eminent muſical performers of all kinds, both vocal and inſtrumental, with which London abounded, was far greater than in any other city of Europe, it was lamented that there was no public periodical occaſion for collecting and conſolidating them into one band; by which means a performance might be exhibited on ſo grand and magnificent a ſcale as no other part of the world could equal. The birth and death of HANDEL naturally occurred to three ſuch enthuſiaſtic admirers of that great maſter, and it was

immediately recollected, that the next (now the preſent) year, would be a proper time for the introduction of ſuch a cuſtom: as it formed a *complete century* ſince his birth, and an exact *quarter of a century* ſince his deceaſe.

The plan was ſoon after communicated to the governors of the Muſical Fund, who approved it, and promiſed their aſſiſtance. It was next ſubmitted to the directors of the concert of Ancient Muſic, who, with an alacrity which does honour to their zeal for the memory of the great artiſt HANDEL, voluntarily undertook the trouble of managing and directing the celebrity. At length, the deſign coming to the knowledge of the king, it was honoured with his Majeſty's ſanction and patronage. Weſtminſter-Abbey, where the bones of the great muſician were depoſited, was thought the propereſt place for the performance; and application having been made to the biſhop of Rocheſter for the uſe of it, his lordſhip, finding that the ſcheme was honoured with the patronage of his majeſty, readily conſented; only requeſting, as the performance would interfere with the annual benefit for the Weſtminſter Infirmary, that part of the profits might be appropriated to that charity, as an indemnification for the loſs it would ſuſtain. To this the projectors of the plan acceded; and it was afterwards ſettled, that the profits of the firſt day's performance ſhould be equally divided between the Muſical Fund and the Weſtminſter Infirmary; and thoſe of the ſubſequent days be *ſolely* applied to the uſe of that fund which HANDEL himſelf ſo long helped to ſuſtain, and to which he not only bequeathed a thouſand pounds, but which almoſt every Muſician in the capital annually contributes his money, his performance, or both, to ſupport.

Application was next made to Mr. James Wyatt, the architect, to furniſh plans for the neceſſary decorations of the abbey; drawings

ſings of which having been ſhewn to his Majeſty, were approved. The general idea was to produce the effect of a royal muſical chapel, with the orcheſtra terminating one end, and the accommodations for the Royal Family, the other.

The arrangement of the performance of each day was next ſettled, and I have authority to ſay, that it was at his majeſty's inſtigation that the celebrity was extended to three days inſtead of two, which he thought would not be ſufficient for the diſplay of HANDEL's powers, or fulfilling the charitable purpoſes to which it was intended to devote the profits. It was originally intended to have celebrated this grand Muſical Feſtival on the 20th, 22d, and 23d of April; and the 20th being the day of the funeral of HANDEL, part of the Muſic was, in ſome meaſure, ſo ſelected as to apply to that incident. But, in conſequence of the ſudden diſſolution of parliament, it was thought proper to defer the feſtival to the 26th, 27th, and 29th of May, which ſeems to have been for its advantage: as many perſons of tender conſtitutions, who ventured to go to Weſtminſter-Abbey in warm weather, would not have had the courage to go thither in cold.

Impreſſed with a reverence for the memory of HANDEL, no ſooner was the project known, but moſt of the practical Muſicians in the kingdom eagerly manifeſted their zeal for the enterpriſe; and many of the moſt eminent profeſſors, waving all claims to precedence in the band, offered to perform in any ſubordinate ſtation, in which their talents could be moſt uſeful.

By the latter end of February the plan and neceſſary arrangements were ſo far digeſted and advanced, that the Directors ventured to inſert in all the Newſpapers, the following advertiſement.

" Under

"Under the Patronage of His MAJESTY.

In Commemoration of HANDEL, who was buried in Weſtminſter-Abbey, on the 21ſt of April, 1759.

On WEDNESDAY the 21ſt of April next, will be performed in Weſtminſter-Abbey, under the management of the

Earl of Exeter	Lord Paget
Earl of Sandwich	Right Hon. H. Morrice
Viſcount Dudley Ward	Sir Watkin Williams Wynn, Bart.
Viſcount Fitzwilliam	Sir Richard Jebb, Bart.

Directors of the Concert of Ancient Muſic;

Some of the moſt approved pieces of Sacred Muſic, of that great Compoſer.—The doors will be opened at Nine o'Clock, and the performance will begin preciſely at Twelve.

And on the Evening of the ſame day, will be performed, at the Pantheon, a Grand Miſcellaneous CONCERT of Vocal and Inſtrumental Muſic; conſiſting entirely of pieces ſelected from the works of Handel.—The doors will be opened at Six o'Clock, and the Concert will begin exactly at Eight.

And on Saturday Morning, April 24th, will be performed, in Weſtminſter Abbey, the Sacred Oratorio of the MESSIAH.

Such is the reverence for this illuſtrious Maſter, that moſt of the performers in London, and a great many from different parts of the kingdom, have generouſly offered their aſſiſtance; and the Orcheſtra will conſiſt of at leaſt Four Hundred Performers, a more numerous Band than was ever known to be collected in any country, or on any occaſion whatever. The profits ariſing from the performances, will be applied to charitable purpoſes.

The Directors of the Concert of Antient Muſic have opened books to receive the names of ſuch perſons as are deſirous of encouraging this undertaking, and will deliver out the Tickets for the ſeveral performances, at ONE GUINEA each. Books will likewiſe be opened, and Tickets delivered at Mr. Lee's, No. 44, Wigmore-ſtreet; Birchell's Muſic-ſhop, No. 129, New Bond-ſtreet; Longman and Broderip's, in the Haymarket and Cheapſide; Bremner's, near the new Church in the Strand; and at Wright's and Co. Catherine-ſtreet, Strand.

No perſon will be admitted without a ticket; and it is hoped, that thoſe who mean to ſubſcribe, will do it as early as they conveniently can, that proper ſeats may be provided for them."

In

In order to render the band as powerful and complete as poſſible, it was determined to employ every ſpecies of inſtrument that was capable of producing grand effects in a great orcheſtra, and ſpacious building. Among theſe, the SACBUT, or DOUBLE TRUMPET, was ſought; but ſo many years had elapſed ſince it had been uſed in this kingdom, that, neither the inſtrument, nor a performer upon it, could eaſily be found. It was, however, diſcovered, after much uſeleſs enquiry, not only here, but by letter, on the continent, that in his Majeſty's military band there were ſix muſicians who played the three ſeveral ſpecies of ſacbut; tenor, baſe, and double baſe *(a)*. The names of theſe performers will be found in the general liſt of the band.

The DOUBLE BASSOON, which was ſo conſpicuous in the Orcheſtra and powerful in its effect, is likewiſe a tube of ſixteen feet. It was made with the approbation of Mr. HANDEL, by Stainſby, the Flute-maker, for the coronation of his late majeſty, George the Second. The late ingenious Mr. Lampe, author of the juſtly admired Muſic of *the Dragon of Wantley*, was the perſon intended to perform on it; but, for want of a proper reed, or for ſome other cauſe, at preſent unknown, no uſe was made of it, at that time; nor, indeed, though it has been often attempted, was it ever introduced into any band in England, till now, by the ingenuity and perſeverance of Mr. Aſhly, of the Guards.

THE DOUBLE-BASE KETTLE DRUMS were made from models of Mr. Aſbridge, of Drury-lane orcheſtra, in

(a) The moſt common ſacbut, which the Italians call *trombone*, and the Germans *Poſaune*, is an octave below the common trumpet; its length eight feet, when folded, and ſixteen, ſtrait. There is a manual, by which a note can be acquired a fourth lower than the uſual loweſt ſound on the trumpet, and all the tones and ſemitones of the common ſcale.

copper,

copper, it being impoſſible to procure plates of braſs, large enough. The Tower-drums, which by permiſſion of his grace the duke of Richmond, were brought to the Abbey on this occaſion, are thoſe which belong to the Ordnance ſtores, and were taken by the duke of Marlborough at the battle of Malplaquet, in 1709. Theſe are hemiſpherical, or a circle divided; but thoſe of Mr. Aſbridge are more cylindrical, being much longer, as well as more capacious, than the common kettle-drum; by which he accounts for the ſuperiority of their tone to that of all other drums. Theſe three ſpecies of kettle-drums, which may be called tenor, baſe, and double-baſe, were an octave below each other.

The excellent ORGAN, erected at the weſt end of the Abbey, for the commemoration performances only, is the workmanſhip of the ingenious Mr. Samuel Green, of Iſlington. It was fabricated for the cathedral of Canterbury, but before its departure for the place of its deſtination, it was permitted to be opened in the capital on this memorable occaſion. The keys of communication with the harpſichord, at which Mr. Bates, the conductor, was ſeated, extended nineteen feet from the body of the organ, and twenty feet ſeven inches below the perpendicular of the ſet of keys by which it is uſually played. Similar keys were firſt contrived in this country for HANDEL himſelf, at his Oratorios; but to convey them to ſo great a diſtance from the inſtrument, without rendering the touch impracticably heavy, required uncommon ingenuity and mechanical reſources.

In celebrating the diſpoſition, diſcipline, and effects, of this moſt numerous and excellent band, the merit of the admirable architect who furniſhed the elegant deſigns for the Orcheſtra and Galleries, muſt not be forgotten; as, when filled, they conſtituted one of the grandeſt and moſt magnificent ſpectacles which imagi-

imagination can delineate. I am acquainted with few buildings, that have been conſtructed from plans of Mr. Wyatt, in which he exerciſed his genius in *Gothic*; but all the preparations for receiving their Majeſties, and the firſt perſonages in the kingdom, at the eaſt end; upwards of Five Hundred Muſicians at the weſt; and the public in general, to the number of between three and four thouſand perſons, in the area and galleries, ſo wonderfully correſponded with the ſtyle of architecture of this venerable and beautiful ſtructure, that there was nothing viſible, either for uſe or ornament, which did not harmonize with the principal tone of the building, and which may not, metaphorically, have been ſaid to be in *perfect tune* with it. But, beſides the wonderful manner in which this conſtruction exhibited the band to the ſpectators, the Orcheſtra was ſo judiciouſly contrived, that almoſt every performer, both vocal and inſtrumental, was in full view of the conductor and leader; which accounts, in ſome meaſure, for the uncommon eaſe with which the performers confeſs they executed their parts.

The whole preparations for theſe grand performances were compriſed within the weſtern part of the building, or broad aiſle; and ſome excellent judges declared, that, apart from their beauty, they never had ſeen ſo wonderful a piece of carpentry, as the Orcheſtra and Galleries, after Mr. Wyatt's models. Indeed, the goodneſs of the workmanſhip was demonſtrated by the whole four days of commemoration in the Abbey being exempted from every ſpecies of accident, notwithſtanding the great crouds, and conflicts for places, which each performance produced.

At the eaſt end of the aiſle, juſt before the back of the choir-organ, ſome of the pipes of which were viſible below, a throne was erected in a beautiful Gothic ſtyle, correſponding with that of the Abbey, and a center box, richly decorated and furniſhed

with crimſon ſatin, fringed with gold, for the reception of their Majeſties and the Royal Family; on the right hand of which was a box for the Biſhops, and, on the left, one for the Dean and Chapter of Weſtminſter; immediately below theſe two boxes were two others, one, on the right, for the families and friends of the Directors, and the other for thoſe of the prebendaries of Weſtminſter. Immediately below the King's-box was placed one for the Directors themſelves; who were all diſtinguiſhed by white wands tipped with gold, and gold medals, ſtruck on the occaſion, appending from white ribbands. Theſe their Majeſties likewiſe condeſcended to wear, at each performance. Behind, and on each ſide of the throne, there were ſeats for their Majeſty's ſuite, maids of honour, grooms of the bedchamber, pages, &c.

The Orcheſtra was built at the oppoſite extremity, aſcending regularly from the height of ſeven feet from the floor, to upwards of forty, from the baſe of the pillars; and extending from the centre to the top of the ſide aiſle.

The intermediate ſpace below was filled up with level benches, and appropriated to the early ſubſcribers. The ſide aiſles were formed into long galleries, ranging with the Orcheſtra, and aſcending, ſo as to contain twelve rows on each ſide: the fronts of which projected before the pillars, and were ornamented with feſtoons of crimſon morine.

At the top of the Orcheſtra was placed the occaſional organ, in a Gothic frame, mounting to, and mingling with, the ſaints and martyrs repreſented in the painted glaſs on the weſt window. On each ſide of the organ, cloſe to the window, were placed the kettle-drums, deſcribed above. The choral bands were principally placed in view of Mr. Bates, on ſteps, ſeemingly aſcending into the clouds, in each of the ſide aiſles, as their termination

was

was inviſible to the audience. The principal ſingers were ranged in the front of the Orcheſtra, as at Oratorios, accompanied by the choirs of St. Paul, the Abbey, Windſor, and the Chapel-Royal.

The deſign of appointing *Subdirectors*, was to diminiſh, as much as poſſible, the trouble of the noblemen and gentlemen who had projected the undertaking, as well as that of the Conductor: and this was effected with great diligence and zeal, not only in ſuperintending the buſineſs at the doors of admiſſion, and conducting the company to their ſeats, which fell to the ſhare of Dr. Cook, Dr. Ayrton, and meſſieurs Jones, Aylward, and Parſons, all profeſſors of the firſt claſs; but in arranging the performers, and conveying ſignals to the ſeveral parts of that wide-extended Orcheſtra: departments which fell to the lot of Dr. Arnold and Mr. Dupuis, organiſts and compoſers to his Majeſty, and Mr. Redmond Simpſon, eminent and reſpectable profeſſors, of great experience, who may be ſaid to have acted as *Adjutant-Generals* on the occaſion; Dr. Arnold and Mr. Depuis having been placed, on different ſides of the Orcheſtra, over the vocal choir, and Mr. Simpſon in the centre, over the ſubordinate inſtrumental performers. In ſelecting theſe delegates among the members of the Muſical Society, great care was taken not to enfeeble the Orcheſtra, by employing ſuch performers as were likely to augment its force; but ſuch as had either ceaſed to play in public, or whoſe inſtruments being the organ and harpſichord, of which only one was wanted, accepted of parts which were not the leſs uſeful for being *ſilently* performed.

Of the care and intelligence with which preparations were made for theſe performances, ſome judgment may be formed from the ſingle circumſtance of the Muſic-books that were provided for

each day: as two hundred and ſeventy-four were requiſite for the firſt performance, in the Abbey; a hundred and thirty-eight for the Pantheon; and two hundred and ſixty-ſeven for the Meſſiah; amounting, in all, to ſeven hundred and ſeventy-nine; not one of which was miſſing, or miſlaid, nor was an inſtrument wanting during the whole commemoration: as the porters had ſtrict orders to convey all the inſtruments into the orcheſtra, at the Abbey, by ſeven o'clock in the morning of each day, to prevent the company from being incommoded by the admiſſion of ſuch as were unwieldy.

Few circumſtances will, perhaps, more aſtoniſh veteran Muſicians, than to be informed, that there was but *one general Rehearſal* for each day's performance: an indiſputable proof of the high ſtate of cultivation to which practical Muſic is at preſent arrived in this country; for, if good performers had not been found, ready made, a *dozen* rehearſals would not have been ſufficient to make them ſo. Indeed, Mr. Bates, in examining the liſt of performers, and enquiring into their ſeveral merits, ſuggeſted the idea of what he called a *drilling Rehearſal*, at Tottenham-ſtreet Concert-Room, a week before the performance; in order to hear ſuch volunteers, particularly chorus-ſingers, as were but little known to himſelf, or of whoſe abilities his aſſiſtant was unable to ſpeak with certainty *(a)*. At this rehearſal, though it conſiſted of a hundred and twenty performers, not more than two of that number were deſired to attend no more.

At the general rehearſal in the Abbey, mentioned above, more than five hundred perſons found means to obtain admiſſion, in

(a) This was Mr. John Aſhly, of the Guards, whoſe unwearied zeal and diligence were conſtantly employed with ſuch intelligence and ſucceſs, as greatly facilitated the advancement of the plan, and diminiſhed the anxiety of Mr. Bates, as well as the weight with which he had voluntarily loaded his ſhoulders.

ſpite

ſpite of every endeavour to ſhut out all but the performers; for fear of interruption, and, perhaps, of failure in the firſt attempts at incorporating and conſolidating ſuch a numerous band: conſiſting, not only of all the regulars, both native and foreign, which the capital could furniſh, but all the irregulars, that is, *dilettanti*, and provincial Muſicians of character, who could be muſtered, many of whom had never heard or ſeen each other before. This intruſion, which was very much to the diſſatisfaction of the Managers and Conductor, ſuggeſted the idea of turning the eagerneſs of the public to ſome profitable account for the charity, by fixing the price of admiſſion to Half a Guinea for each perſon.

But, beſides the profits derived from ſubſequent rehearſals, the conſequences of the firſt were not without their uſe: for the pleaſure and aſtoniſhment of the audience, at the ſmall miſtakes, and great effects of this firſt experiment, which many had condemned by anticipation, were ſoon communicated to the lovers of Muſic, throughout the town, to the great increaſe of ſubſcribers and ſolicitors for tickets. For though the friends of the Directors were early in ſubſcribing, perhaps, from perſonal reſpect, as much as expectation of a higher muſical repaſt than uſual; yet, the public, in general, did not manifeſt great eagerneſs in ſecuring tickets, till after this rehearſal, Friday, May 21, which was reported to have aſtoniſhed even the performers themſelves, by its correctneſs and effects. But ſo intereſting did the undertaking become, by this favourable rumour, that from the great demand of tickets, it was found neceſſary to cloſe the ſubſcription; which was done ſo rigorouſly, that the author of this account was unable, on Monday, to obtain of the Managers tickets of any kind, on any terms, for ſome of his friends, who had neglected to give in their names ſooner.

Many

Many families, as well as individuals, were, however, attracted to the capital by this celebrity; and I never remember it ſo full, not only ſo late in the year, but at any time in my life, except at the coronation of his preſent Majeſty. Many of the performers came, unſolicited, from the remoteſt parts of the kingdom, at their own expence; ſome of them, however, were afterwards reimburſed, and had a ſmall gratuity in conſideration of the time they were kept from their families, by the two unexpected additional performances.

Foreigners, particularly the French, muſt be much aſtoniſhed at ſo numerous a band moving in ſuch exact meaſure, without the aſſiſtance of a *Coryphæus* to beat the time, either with a roll of paper, or a noiſy *baton*, or truncheon. Rouſſeau ſays, that "the "more time is beaten, the leſs it is kept;" and, it is certain, that when the meaſure is broken, the fury of the muſical-general, or director, increaſing with the diſobedience and confuſion of his troops, he becomes more violent, and his ſtrokes and geſticulations more ridiculous, in proportion to their diſorder.

The celebrated Lulli, whoſe favour in France, during the laſt century, was equal to that of HANDEL in England, during the preſent, may be ſaid to have *beat himſelf to death*, by intemperate paſſion in marking the meaſure to an ill-diſciplined band; for in regulating, with his cane, the time of a *Te Deum*, which he had compoſed for the recovery of his royal patron, Louis XIV. from a dangerous ſickneſs, in 1686, he wounded his foot by accidentally ſtriking on that inſtead of the floor, in ſo violent a manner, that, from the contuſion occaſioned by the blow, a mortification enſued, which coſt him his life, at the age of fifty-four!

As this Commemoration is not only the firſt inſtance of a band of ſuch magnitude being aſſembled together, but of *any* band,

band, at all numerous, performing in a ſimilar ſituation, without the aſſiſtance of a *Manu-ductor*, to regulate the meaſure, the performances in Weſtminſter-Abbey may be ſafely pronounced, no leſs remarkable for the multiplicity of voices and inſtruments employed, than for accuracy and preciſion. When all the wheels of that huge machine, the Orcheſtra, were in motion, the effect reſembled clock-work in every thing, but want of feeling and expreſſion.

And, as the power of gravity and attraction in bodies is proportioned to their maſs and denſity, ſo it ſeems as if the magnitude of this band had commanded and impelled adheſion and obedience, beyond that of any other of inferior force. The pulſations in every limb, and ramifications of veins and arteries in an animal, could not be more reciprocal, iſochronous, and under the regulation of the heart, than the members of this body of Muſicians under that of the Conductor and Leader. The totality of ſound ſeemed to proceed from one voice, and one inſtrument; and its powers produced, not only new and exquiſite ſenſations in judges and lovers of the art, but were felt by thoſe who never received pleaſure from Muſic before.

Theſe effects, which will be long remembered by the preſent public, perhaps to the diſadvantage of all other choral performances, run the riſk of being doubted by all but thoſe who heard them, and the preſent deſcription of being pronounced fabulous, if it ſhould ſurvive the preſent generation.

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Mr. Zink

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Mr. Aſhley

Double Basses.

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Mr. Marley
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Mr. Porney
Mr. Tompſon

Tromboni, or Sacbuts.

Mr. Karſt
Mr. Kneller
Mr. Moeller
Mr. Neibour

Mr. Pick
Mr. Zink.
Theſe performers played on other inſtruments, when the ſacbuts were not wanted.

Horns.

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Mr. Gray
Mr. Kaye
Mr. Leander
Mr. Lely
Mr. Lord
Mr. M'Pherſon
Mr. Miller
Mr. Moeller
Mr. Ockle
Mr. Payola
Mr. Pieltin

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Mr. Burnet
Mr. Houghton
Mr. Nelſon

Double Kettle-Drum.

Mr. Aſhbridge

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Signor Pacchierotti, at the Pantheon only
Signor Bartolini

Three Maſter Aſhleys
Miſs Burnet

Maſter Bellamy
Mrs. Burnet
Ten Chapel Boys
Maſter Dorion
Miſs Hudſon
Two Maſter Knyvetts
Maſter Latter
Maſter Loader
Mrs. Love
Maſter Lowther
Maſter Mathews
Miſs Middleton
Miſs Parke

Ten St. Paul's Boys
Maſter Piper
Maſter Taylor
Eight Weſtminſter Boys
Six Windſor Boys.

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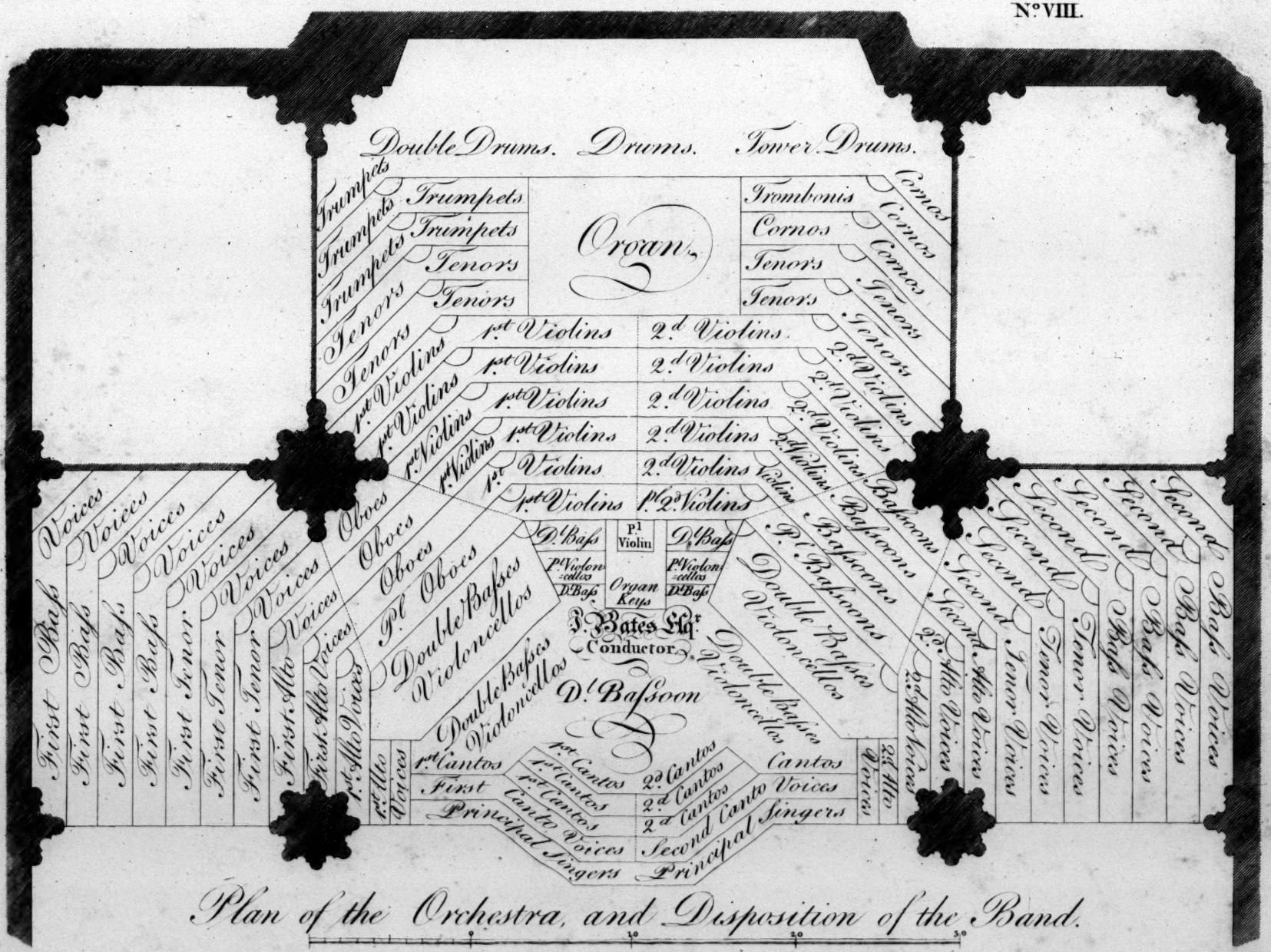
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Mr. Tombs, Wincheſter
Mr. Tomſon
Mr. Townſend
Mr. Waite
Mr. Watts
Mr. Webb
Mr. Wheatley, Greenwich
Mr. Wheatly, jun.
Rev. Mr. Willet

COM-

N.° VIII.


Double Drums.
Drums.
Tower Drums.
Trumpets
Trumpets
Trumpets
Trumpets
Tenors
Tenors
Tenors
Tenors
Organ.
Trombonis
Cornos
Cornos
Cornos
Cornos
Tenors
Tenors
Tenors
Tenors
1st Violins
1st Violins
1st Violins
1st Violins
1st Violins
1st Violins
2d Violins
2d Violins
2d Violins
2d Violins
2d Violins
2d Violins
2d Violins
2d Violins
Violins
Violins


WESTMINSTER ABBEY
COMMEMORATION
OF HANDEL
MAY XXVI MDCCLXXXIV

COMMEMORATION

OF

HANDEL.

FIRST PERFORMANCE,

WESTMINSTER ABBEY,

Wednesday, May 26, 1784.



COMMEMORATION

OF

HANDEL.

FIRST PERFORMANCE,

WESTMINSTER-ABBEY,

WEDNESDAY, May 26, 1784.

[To face P. 24.]

LIST of the Compoſitions ſelected from the Works of HANDEL,

For the firſt Commemoration Performance.

The CORONATION ANTHEM.

PART I.

OVERTURE—ESTHER.
The Dettingen TE DEUM.

PART II.

OVERTURE, with the DEAD MARCH in SAUL.
Part of the FUNERAL ANTHEM.
When the ear heard him.
He delivered the poor that cried.
His body is buried in Peace.
GLORIA PATRI, from the JUBILATE.

PART III.

ANTHEM—*O ſing unto the Lord.*
CHORUS—*The Lord ſhall reign,* from ISRAEL IN EGYPT.

PART I.

EARLY in the morning, the weather being very favourable, perſons of all ranks quitted their carriages with impatience and apprehenſion, leſt they ſhould not obtain ſeats, and preſented themſelves at the ſeveral doors of Weſtminſter Abbey, which were advertiſed to be opened at Nine o'clock; but the door-keepers not having taken their poſts, and the Orcheſtra not being wholly finiſhed, or, perhaps, the reſt of the Abbey quite ready for the reception of the audience, till near Ten o'clock; ſuch a croud of ladies and gentlemen were aſſembled together as became very formidable and terrific to each other, particularly the female part of the expectants; for ſome of theſe being in full dreſs, and every inſtant more and more incommoded and alarmed, by the violence of thoſe who preſſed forward, in order to get near the door, ſcreamed; others fainted; and all were diſmayed and apprehenſive of fatal conſequences: as many of the moſt violent, among the gentlemen, threatened to break open the doors; a meaſure, which if adopted, would, probably, have coſt many of the moſt feeble and helpleſs their lives; as they muſt, infallibly, have been thrown down, and trampled on, by the robuſt and impatient part of the croud.

It was a conſiderable time after a ſmall door at the weſt end was opened, before this preſs abated: as tickets could not be

examined, and cheques given in return, faſt enough, to diminiſh the candidates for admiſſion, or their impatience.

However, except diſhevelled hair, and torn garments, no real miſchief ſeems to have happened. In leſs than an hour after the doors were opened, the whole area and galleries of the Abbey ſeemed too full for the admiſſion of more company; and a conſiderable time before the performance began, the doors were all ſhut to every one but their Majeſties, and their ſuite, who arrived ſoon after Twelve; and on entering the box, prepared for their reception, pleaſure and aſtoniſhment, at the ſight of the company and diſpoſition of the Orcheſtra and Performers, were painted ſo ſtrongly in their countenances, as to be viſible to all their delighted ſubjects preſent. Eagerneſs and expectation for the *premier coup d'archet* were now wound up to the higheſt pitch of impatience; when a ſilence, the moſt profound and ſolemn, was gently interrupted by the proceſſional ſymphony of the

CORONATION ANTHEM,

Compoſed in 1727.

" *Zadoc the prieſt, and Nathan the prophet, anointed Solomon* " *king: and all the people rejoiced; and ſaid, God ſave the king:* " *long live the king: may the king live for ever. Hallelujah.* " *Amen.*" 1 Kings i. 38.

And from the time that the firſt ſound of this celebrated, and well-known compoſition, was heard, to the final cloſe, every hearer ſeemed afraid of breathing, leſt it ſhould obſtruct the ſtream of harmony in its paſſage to the ear.

From the progreſs which practical Muſic has made in this country, ſince HANDEL's time, it might, perhaps, be ſafely pronounced,

nounced, that this Anthem was never ſo well performed, under his own direction. As I heard it myſelf at the Coronation of his preſent Majeſty, when a numerous band was aſſembled under the direction of the late Doctor Boyce, I can, at leaſt, venture to ſay that, in recollection, the performance then will bear no compariſon with that now, in the ſame place, in honour of the compoſer *(a)*.

OVERTURE IN ESTHER,

Compoſed in 1720.

The firſt movement of this grave and majeſtic Overture has always aſtoniſhed me, by the ſimplicity of its modulation; which, though almoſt rigorouſly confined to the diatonic intervals, and harmony of the key, is never monotonous in its effects. And the firſt bar of the melody, though ſo often repeated by the two violins, is ſo grateful and pleaſing, as to be always welcome to the ear.

All the movements of this admirable Overture firſt appeared in HANDEL's *Trios*, as did many of thoſe he introduced afterwards in his Organ Concertos; and he might with more truth have ſaid of thoſe Trios: *Condo et compono, quæ mox depromere poſſim*, than Geminiani, of his laſt, and worſt ſet of Concertos.

(a) There was, doubtleſs, the greateſt propriety in ſaluting their Majeſties, at their entrance, with the *Coronation Anthem*; and yet, I could not help wiſhing, that this performance, ſo different from all others, had opened with ſome piece in which every voice and every inſtrument might have been heard at the ſame inſtant; as ſuch an effect might then have been produced, as can never be obtained by gradation: the difference between *nothing* and *ſomething* being greater, than between any two degrees of excellence. Indeed, the moſt ſudden and *ſurpriſing* effect of this ſtupendous band, was, perhaps, produced by ſimultaneous tuning: as all the ſtringed-inſtruments performed this taſk, *à double corde*, and theſe ſtrings being all *open*, their force was more than equal to that of two ſtopt-ſtrings, upon two different inſtruments.

The ſecond movement, which has always been juſtly admired for the gravity and contraſt between the trebles, which frequently repeat a fragment of canto fermo, and the baſe, had a moſt ſtriking effect given to it, by the force and energy of this band. And the fugue, which is compoſed upon a moſt marked and happy ſubject, though ſeldom in more than three parts, as the tenor conſtantly plays an octave above the baſe, ſeemed more rich in harmony, and ingenious in contrivance, to-day, than uſual. There never was, perhaps, an inſtrumental fugue on a more agreeable ſubject; treated in a more maſterly manner; or more pleaſing in its effects, than this; which differs in ſeveral circumſtances from almoſt all other fugues: firſt, in the given ſubject being accompanied by an airy moving baſe; ſecondly, by the reverſion of the ſubject, when firſt anſwered by the ſecond violin; and thirdly, by the epiſodes, or ſolo parts, for the hautbois *(a)*. This overture, almoſt ever ſince it was compoſed, has been ſo conſtantly played at Saint Paul's, at the Feaſt of the Sons of the Clergy, that it now ſeems in a peculiar manner dedicated to the ſervice of the Church.

THE DETTINGEN TE DEUM

Compoſed in 1743.

This ſplendid production has been ſo frequently performed at Saint Paul's and elſewhere, that nothing could be added to its celebrity by my feeble praiſe. I ſhall only obſerve, that as it was compoſed for a military triumph, the fourteen trumpets, two pair

(a) Theſe ſolo parts were played by twelve hautbois, in uniſon; which united in ſuch a manner, as to have the effect of a ſingle inſtrument. The ſhort ſolo part for the hautbois in the ſlow movement, was performed, by Mr. Tho. Vincent, alone, who ſo long enjoyed the favour of the town upon that inſtrument.

of

of common kettle-drums, two pair of double drums from the Tower, and a pair of double-baſe drums, made expreſsly for this Commemoration, were introduced with great propriety; indeed, theſe laſt drums, except the deſtruction, had all the effect of the moſt powerful artillery.

There is ſome reaſon to ſuſpect that HANDEL, in ſetting his grand *Te Deum* for the peace of Utrecht, as well as this, confined the meaning of the word *cry* to a ſorrowful ſenſe: as both the movements to the words——

"*To thee all angels* cry *aloud,*"

are not only in a minor-key, but ſlow, and plaintive. It contraſts well, however, with the preceding and ſubſequent movements. Indeed, the latter glows with all the fire and vehemence of HANDEL's genius for polyphonic combinations and contrivances.

The grave and ſolemn praiſe of the *Apoſtles*, *Prophets*, and *Martyrs*, meaſured by the conſtant majeſtic motion of the baſe, is well ſymbolized.

"*Thou ſitteſt at the right hand of God,*" &c.

is expreſſed in a ſtrain that is remarkably pleaſing, and which, in ſpite of forty years, ſtill retains all the bloom and freſhneſs of novelty: and

"*We therefore pray thee help thy ſervants, whom thou haſt re-*
"*deemed with thy precious blood,*"

is admirable, in fugue, modulation, and counterpoint, *à Capella*; as is the next movement, to the three verſes:

"*Make them to be numbered*—
"*O Lord ſave thy people*—and
"*Govern them and lift them up for ever,*"

with the additional merit of a happy verbal expreſſion.

"*Day*

" *Day by day we magnify thee,*"

is grand and well accented, though ſome of the trumpet paſſages are a little *viellis*. The art of fugue, both in that, and the next verſe:

" *And we worſhip thy name ever world without end,*"

is treated with HANDEL's uſual clearneſs and felicity.

As he was ſure of a great and varied band, when he compoſed this *Te Deum*, he has made as judicious a uſe of the ſeveral inſtruments of his Orcheſtra, as a painter could do of the colours on his palette: now exhibiting them in their full luſtre, ſingly; then augmenting or diminiſhing their force, by light and ſhade, and often by combination with others, making them ſubſervient to different purpoſes of expreſſion and effect.

" *Vouchſafe, O Lord, to keep us this day without ſin,*"

is ſet to an exquiſite ſtrain, in which the modulation is no leſs ſurpriſing, learned, and curious, than pathetic and pleaſing *(a)*.

The laſt movement:

" *O Lord, in thee have I truſted*—&c."

is what the Italians would allow to be *ben tirato*. Indeed, it is an excellent diſplay of HANDEL's reſources in diſcovering and availing himſelf of the moſt latent advantages which every ſimple as well as artificial ſubject affords him. The ſymphony of this Chorus, which is chiefly conſtructed upon a *ground-baſe*, beginning by two trumpets, that are afterwards joined by the other inſtruments, is ſtately and intereſting, though in the meaſure of a

(a) The ſcore of this movement, as printed many years ſince, by Walſh, is extremely incorrect; particularly in the ſecond violin and tenor parts of the laſt line, bars four and five.

common

common minuet. The long ſolo part, after the ſymphony, for a contralto voice, with ſoft and ſparing accompaniments, renders the ſubſequent ſudden burſt of all the voices and inſtruments the more ſtriking. And the latter part, in fugue, with an alternate uſe of the ground-baſe, ſeems to wind up this magnificent production by

" Untwiſting all the chains that tie
" The hidden ſoul of harmony."

PART II.

OVERTURE IN SAUL.

Compoſed in 1740.

THE firſt movement of this admirable compoſition, ſo different from the common ſtyle of Overture, which Lulli had eſtabliſhed, and to which all the compoſers in Europe, for more than fifty years, implicitly conformed, is extremely pleaſing; and when it was firſt heard, muſt have ſurpriſed, by the grace and novelty of its conduct and paſſages.

Though the reſt of this Overture was ſuperſeded, in favour of the *Dead March*, yet it is but juſtice to the author to ſay, that the ſecond movement, with ſolo parts for the principal hautbois and violin, is ſo *chantant*, as perpetually to remind the hearer of a vocal duet, richly accompanied. The fugue, indeed, with ſolo parts for the organ, was, perhaps, very judiciouſly omitted; as the paſſages have been long in ſuch favour with the imitators of HANDEL, as to be rendered trite and vulgar. The *Minuet* will, however, always preſerve its grace and dignity; being one of the few final movements of an Overture, which neither age, nor faſhion, can deform.

THE DEAD MARCH IN SAUL.

This moſt happy and affecting movement, which has retained its favour near half a century, and which is ſo ſimple, ſolemn, and ſorrowful, that it can never be heard, even upon a ſingle inſtrument,

ſtrument, without exciting melancholy ſenſations, received here all the dignity and grandeur which it could poſſibly derive from the various tones of the moſt powerful, as well as beſt diſciplined, band, that was ever aſſembled.

PART OF THE ANTHEM WHICH WAS PERFORMED IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY AT THE FUNERAL OF HER SACERD MAJESTY QUEEN CAROLINE, 1737.

" *When the ear heard her, then it bleſſed her; and when the eye ſaw her, it gave witneſs of her.*" Job xxix. 11.

This elegant, mild, and ſorrowing ſtrain, after all the riotous clangor of jubilation in the *Te Deum*, and powerful percuſſion of drums, and tuneful blaſts of trumpets and ſacbuts, in the Dead March, was ſoothing and comforting to the ear. Contraſt is the great ſource of our muſical pleaſure; for however delighted we may be with *quick*, *ſlow*, *loud*, or *ſoft*, for a certain time, variety is ſo neceſſary to ſtimulate attention, that the performance which is in want of the one, is never ſure of the other. This charming movement is ſtill ſo new, that it would do honour to the taſte, as well as knowledge in harmony, of any compoſer now living. HANDEL had a verſatile genius; and, if he had continued to write for the Opera, inſtead of the Church, there was no elegance or refinement which Haſſe, Vinci, Pergoleſi, and their ſucceſſors, ever attained, that was out of his reach.

" *She delivered the poor that cried, the fatherleſs, and him that* " *had none to help him.*—Job xxix. 12. *Kindneſs, meekneſs, and* " *comfort were in her tongue*; Eccleſ. xxxvi. 23. *If there was* " *any virtue, aud if there was any praiſe, ſhe thought on thoſe* " *things.*" Phil. iv. 8.

The trebles ſinging alone, and only accompanied in uniſon, by treble inſtruments, at the words—" *kindneſs, meekneſs, and* " *comfort were in her tongue,*" had an admirable effect, in point of contraſt, with the full harmony of the reſt of this charming Chorus. Indeed, this *Nænia* contains all the requiſites of good Muſic, in plain counterpoint: as good harmony, melody, rhythm, accent, and expreſſion *(a)*. The beauties of this ſtrain are of every age and country; no change of faſhion can efface them, or prevent their being felt by perſons of ſenſibility.

" *Their bodies are buried in peace;*" Eccleſ. xliv. 14.

This admirable fragment of ſolemn and ſorrowful harmony, in the Church ſtyle, almoſt wholly without inſtruments, is an excellent introduction to the leſs plaintive ſtrain which follows:

" *But their name liveth evermore;*" Ibid.

which is one of the moſt ſingular and agreeable Choruſes I know, and was performed with an accuracy, power, and ſpirit, which neither that, nor, perhaps, any Muſic of the kind ever received before *(b)*. Each of the three movements from the *Funeral Anthem*, ſeemed to excite ſuch lively ſenſations of grief, as reminded all

(a) There are likewiſe ſome natural and pleaſing imitations in the latter part of the movement, which, however, neither deſtroy the accent, nor render the words unintelligible, the crimes uſually laid to the charge of *Canons*, *Fugues*, and *Imitations*. But HANDEL, who felt, and ſo well expreſſed the *general ſentiments* of the words he ſet to Muſic in our language, was never certain of their *pronunciation:* the word *delivered*, which is generally, by eliſion, made a *triſyllable*, had never, I believe, been contracted to a *diſſyllable*, before; but in this Chorus, though the word is very often repeated, never more than *two notes* were allowed to it.

(b) In this, and the preceding movement, HANDEL has made a happy uſe of a modulation which was very frequent in the ſixteenth century: the giving a common chord to the flat ſeventh of a major key, juſt before a cloſe. The laws of *liaiſon*, or relation, which have been ſince eſtabliſhed, have baniſhed this modulation from ſecular Muſic; but in that of the Church, when ſparingly uſed, it is not only allowable, but productive of fine effects.

preſent

preſent of the ravages which death had made among their particular families and friends, and moved many even to tears.

GLORIA PATRI. From the Jubilate, 1713.

"*Glory be to the Father,*" &c.

This Chorus, from the *Jubilate*, which HANDEL ſet at the ſame time as the grand *Te Deum*, for the peace at Utrecht, and the only *Jubilate* he ever compoſed, being in his grandeſt and moſt magnificent ſtyle, received every poſſible advantage in the performance, from a correct and powerful band, and the moſt mute and eager attention in the audience.

PART III.

ANTHEM. Compoſed about the Year 1719.

Air and Chorus.

" *O ſing unto the Lord a new ſong; O ſing unto the Lord all the whole earth.*" Pſ. xcvi. 1.

MADAME Mara's voice and manner of ſinging in this plain and ſolemn air, ſo admirably accompanied on the hautbois by Fiſher, had a ſudden effect on myſelf, which I never before experienced, even from her performance of more pathetic Muſic. I have long admired her voice, and abilities in various ſtyles of ſinging; but never imagined tenderneſs the peculiar characteriſtic of her performance: however, here, though ſhe had but a few ſimples notes to deliver, they made me ſhiver, and I found it extremely difficult to avoid burſting into tears on hearing them. Indeed, ſhe had not only the power of conveying to the remoteſt corner of this immenſe building, the ſofteſt and moſt artificial inflexions of her ſweet and brilliant voice, but articulated every ſyllable of the words with ſuch neatneſs, preciſion, and purity, that it was rendered as audible, and intelligible, as it could poſſibly have been, in a ſmall theatre, by meer declamation.

Chorus.

" *Declare his honour unto the Heathen, and his wonders unto all* " *people—For the Lord is great, and cannot worthily be praiſed.*" Pſ. xcvi. 3, 4.

This

This Chorus is in a truly grand ſtyle, and produced great effects though there are only three vocal parts. The ſubject is reverſed, at the latter end, in a moſt ingenious manner.

" *He is more to be feared than all gods.*" Pſ. xcvi. 3, 4.

Here the modulation is ſublime, and truly eccleſiaſtic. The pauſe on E b with a perfect chord, the inſtant before a cloſe in F, carries us again to the ſixteenth century *(a)*.

" *The waves of the ſea rage horribly; but yet the Lord who dwells on high is mightier.*" Pſ. xciii. 5.

HANDEL, in the accompaniments of this boiſterous air, has tried, not unſucceſsfully, to expreſs the turbulence of a tempeſtuous ſea; the ſtyle of this kind of Muſic is not meant to be amiable; but it contraſts well with other movements, and this has a ſpirit, and even roughneſs, peculiar to our author.

DUET.

" *O worſhip the Lord in the beauty of holineſs.*" Pſ. xcvi. 9.

The ſolemnity of this movement may, perhaps, ſeem as much too languid to the admirers of the preceding air, as that may be too turbulent for the nerves of thoſe who are partial to this. The truth is, that both verge a little on the extreme; but a compoſer, of ſuch extenſive powers of invention as HANDEL, dares every thing, for the ſake of variety: and this Duet is much in the admired ſtyle of Steffani.

(a) Arkadelt, the moſt celebrated madrigaliſt of that period, in a favourite madrigal beginning: *Il bianco e dolce cigno cantando muore*, has the ſame modulation immediately preceding a cloſe.

CHORUS.

CHORUS.

" *Let all the whole earth ſtand in awe of him.* Ibid. *Let the* " *heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the ſea make a* " *noiſe and all that therein is.*" Ibid. 11.

In the laſt movement of this Chorus, when all the inſtruments are buſied, ſuch a commotion is raiſed, as conſtitutes one of HANDEL's moſt formidable hurricanes.

" Bellowing *notes* burſt with a ſtormy ſound." ADDISON.

CHORUS IN ISRAEL IN EGYPT.

Compoſed in 1738.

" *The Lord ſhall reign for ever and ever.*" Exod. xv. 18.

This moſt admirable compoſition which is written *a due cori*, begins by the tenors and counter-tenors, in uniſon, accompanied only by a ground baſe.

RECITATIVE.

" *For the horſe of Pharaoh with his chariots,*" &c. Exod. xv.

Mr. Norris pronounced this and the following Recitative with the true energy of an Engliſhman, who perfectly comprehended and articulated the words.

CHORUS.

" *The Lord ſhall reign for ever and ever.*"

The return to this ſhort ſtrain of Chorus, after each fragment of Recitative, has a fine effect.

RECITATIVE.

" *And Miriam the propheteſs, the ſiſter of Aaron, took a timbrel* " *in her hand: and all the women went out after her with timbrels* " *and with dances.*" Exod. xv. 19.

CHORUS.

CHORUS.

" *Sing ye to the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriouſly* (*a*). *The* " *Lord ſhall reign for ever and ever. The horſe and his rider he* " *hath thrown into the ſea.*" Exod. xv. 21.

The effects of this compoſition are at once pleaſing, grand, and ſublime! The aggregate of voices and inſtruments had here its full effect. And ſuch is the excellence of this production, that if HANDEL had compoſed no other piece, this alone would have rendered his name immortal, among true lovers and judges of harmony *(b)*.

(a) HANDEL's uncertainty in whatever concerned the accent and pronunciation of our language appears very remarkably in his manner of ſetting this laſt Chorus; where he accents the words, " *For he hath* " *triumphed glorioufly*," thus: " *Fŏr hĕ hăth trĭumphed glōrioufly.*" But in the year 1738, when he compoſed the Oratorio of *Iſrael in Egypt*, our language was not very familiar to him; and he had then but little experience in ſetting it to Muſic.

(b) The art with which HANDEL, in the midſt of all the fire of imagination and ebullition of genius, introduces a ſober, *chanting* kind of *counter-ſubject*, while the other is carried on with uninterrupted ſpirit, is marvellous! (See printed Score, p. 265.) after giving this new ſubject alternately to different ſingle parts, and ſometimes to two parts in thirds, without diminiſhing the activity of the reſt, which are continuing the general Chorus, he for a few bars (p. 277) makes this the principal vocal ſubject; and after being led off by the baſe, a regular reply is made by the other parts, in the fifth and octave. However, the inſtruments never let the firſt ſubject be forgotten, but contrive to play fragments of it, in accompanying the voices, during five bars that they are employed, ſolely, by the ſecond ſubject. After which the firſt theme is reſumed, and continued to the end, by all the Nineteen parts of this multifarious ſcore. I ſhould not have been ſo minute in my analyſis of this Chorus, if it were not to point out a diſcovery which I made in peruſing the ſcore, and to which the performance, in the midſt of the pleaſure I received from it, had not led me. The diſcovery I mean is, that the intervals in this counter-ſubject are exactly the ſame as in the celebrated canon, *Non Nobis Domine*.



I will ſing un-to the Lord.

Whether the ſubject occurred to HANDEL accidentally, or was taken with deſign, I know not; but in either caſe, the notes are happily ſelected, and ingeniouſly uſed. As to the *original inventor*, or *right owner* of that ſeries of notes upon which the canon, which tradition has given to Bird, was conſtructed, they had been the ſubject of fugue to Zarlino, and to old Adrian Villaert, his maſter, long before Bird was born; and, indeed, conſtitute one of the different ſpecies of *tetrachord*, uſed by the Greeks, in the higheſt antiquity.

Upon

Upon the whole, the ſucceſs of this day's performance may, with the utmoſt truth, be pronounced entire; as its effects ſurpaſſed the moſt ſanguine expectations of the greateſt enthuſiaſts for the honour of HANDEL, the glory of the profeſſion, and proſperity of this grand enterpriſe. And, indeed, he muſt have been not only a faſtidious, but a very ignorant and inſenſible hearer, who did not receive new and exquiſite pleaſure from the compoſition and execution of the pieces which were this day performed.

But, in juſtice to the audience, it may be ſaid, that though the frequency of hearing good Muſic in this capital, of late years, has ſo far blunted the edge of curioſity and appetite, that the beſt Operas and Concerts are accompanied with a buz and murmur of converſation, equal to that of a tumultuous croud, or the din of high 'Change; yet now, ſuch a ſtillneſs reigned, as, perhaps, never happened before in ſo large an aſſembly. The midnight hour was never ſounded in more perfect tranquillity, than every note of theſe compoſitions. I have long been watching the operations of good Muſic on the ſenſibility of mankind; but never remember, in any part of Europe, where I attended Muſical exhibitions, in the Church, Theatre, or Chamber, to have obſerved ſo much curioſity excited, attention beſtowed, or ſatisfaction glow in the countenances of thoſe preſent, as on this occaſion. The effects, indeed, upon many were ſuch as modern times have never before experienced. The *Choral power* of harmonical combinations affected ſome to tears, and fainting; while others were melted and enrapt, by the exquiſite ſweetneſs of *ſingle ſounds*. I had little leiſure to contemplate the countenances of thoſe around me; but, when I happened to turn my eyes from the performers, I ſaw nothing but tears of extacy, and looks of wonder and delight.

Indeed,

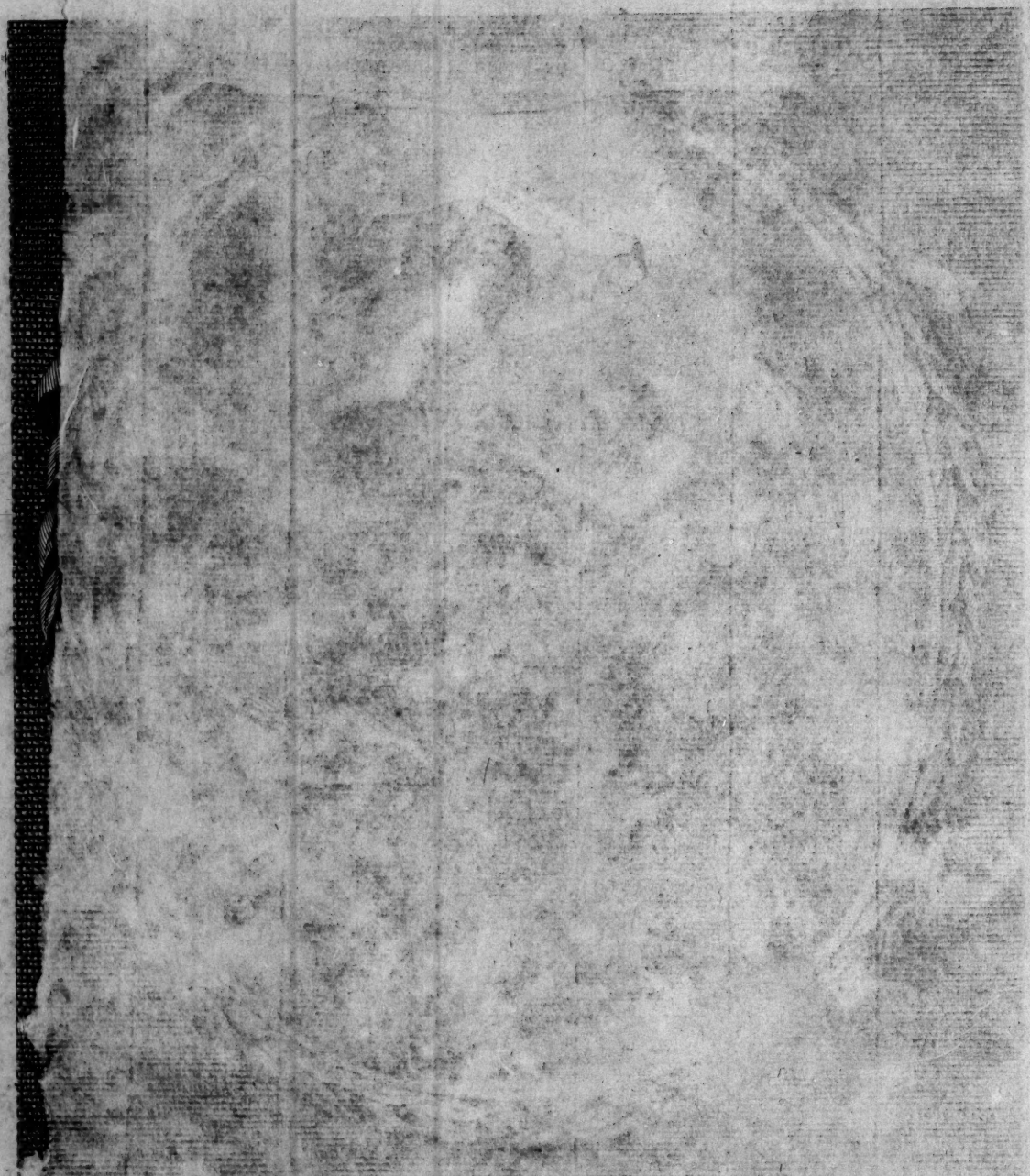
Nothing, however, diſcovered the admirable diſcipline of the band, and unwearied and determined attention of the audience, ſo much as the *pauſes*, which are ſo frequent in HANDEL's Muſic: for theſe were ſo unanimouſly calculated, and meaſured, that no platoon, or ſingle cannon, was ever fired with more exact preciſion or unity of effect, than that with which the whole phalanx of this multitudinous band reſumed its work, after all the ſudden, and uſually, unlimited ceſſations of ſound, commonly called *pauſes*, which, in general, catch loquacity in the fact; but now, at all theſe unexpected moments, the ſilence was found as awful and entire, as if none but the tombs of departed mortals had been preſent.



I. R. Cipriani R.A. Invent.

F. Bartolozzi R.A. Engraver to his Majesty Sculp.

Pub.d as the Act directs April 1st 1784.



Pub.d as the Act directs April 1.st 1784.

COMMEMORATION

OF

HANDEL.

SECOND PERFORMANCE,

PANTHEON.

THURSDAY EVENING, May 27, 1784.

[To face P. 45.]

LIST of the Pieces ſelected for the Second Performance.

PART I.

SECOND HAUTBOIS CONCERTO.

Sorge infauſta, AIR in ORLANDO.

Ye Sons of Iſrael—CHORUS in JOSHUA.

Rende il ſereno—AIR in SOSARMES.

Caro vieni—in RICHARD THE FIRST.

He ſmote all the firſt-born. CHORUS, from ISRAEL IN EGYPT.

Va tacito e naſcoſto. AIR in JULIUS CÆSAR.

SIXTH GRAND CONCERTO.

M'allontano ſdegnoſe pupille. AIR in ATALANTA.

He gave them hail-ſtones for rain. CHORUS—ISRAEL IN EGYPT.

PART II.

FIFTH GRAND CONCERTO.

Dite che ſà—AIR in PTOLEMY.

Vi fida lo ſpoſo—in ÆTIUS.

Fallen is the foe, CHORUS, in JUDAS MACCHABÆUS.

OVERTURE OF ARIADNE.

Alma del gran Pompeo. Accompanied Recitative in JULIUS CÆSAR.

Followed by

Affanni del penſier— AIR in OTHO.

Naſco al boſco — —- in ÆTIUS.

Io t'abbraccio —DUET in RODELINDA.

ELEVENTH GRAND CONCERTO.

Ah! mio cor!—AIR in ALCINA.

ANTHEM. *My heart is inditing of a good matter.*

THE company, to-night, aſſembled very early, for fear of not gaining admiſſion, and the croud was exceſſive. Though the doors were not to be opened till Six o'clock, yet great numbers of well-dreſſed people preſented themſelves at the entrance from Oxford-ſtreet, before that time; and, by Seven, though the performance was not to begin till Eight, the whole building was ſo full, that not another place could be obtained, on any terms. The extreme heat of the weather, augmented by the animal heat of more than Sixteen hundred people, cloſely wedged together, muſt have conſiderably diminiſhed the delight which the lovers of Muſic expected to receive from this night's exhibition: when the body ſuffers, the mind is very difficult to be pleaſed.

The unexpected ſucceſs, and wonderful effects, of the firſt performance in the Abbey, had made impreſſions, and raiſed expectations in the public, which, on the reduced ſcale that the inferior ſize of the buildi..g required, were not likely to be ſatisfied. Great concerts had often been heard in the Pantheon, and great crouds of the firſt people in the kingdom, ſeen there before. And though the band was at leaſt four times more numerous than ordinary, at this place, yet it was ſo inferior, in number and effect, to that at the Abbey, that expectation ſeemed generally diſappointed. The character and variety of the pieces, however, did as much honour to HANDEL, and to the ſelector of them, as their execution did to the performers.

This

This moſt elegant building ſo far ſurpaſſes, in beauty, any other place appropriated to public amuſements, throughout Europe, that it is infinitely more the wonder of foreigners, than natives; and yet theſe, however often they may have ſeen it, ſtill regard it with freſh admiration; and though it was natural to think it impoſſible that any thing could be added to the ſplendor of this ſtructure, the original architect, Mr. James Wyatt, ſo happily exerciſed his creative genius in the preparations for the reception of their Majeſties and the company, that we ſhall preſent our readers with the following deſcription of them.

The eaſt and weſt galleries, and the paſſages behind the colonade, as well as the gallery over the orcheſtra, were filled up with benches, for company. In this gallery there was a new organ-caſe, decorated with a tranſparent portrait of HANDEL, from an original painting, preſented to the Concert of Ancient Muſic by Mr. Redmond Simpſon, with boys in *chiaro oſcuro*, holding a wreath of laurel. The Orcheſtra was conſiderably enlarged. Over the entrance into the Pantheon, oppoſite the Orcheſtra, was erected a gallery, ſupported by ſix Ionic columns, like thoſe of the original building. In the center of this gallery was placed their Majeſty's box, lined with crimſon ſattin, and ornamented with looking-glaſs. It was hung with curtains of crimſon damaſk, fringed with gold. The cieling was elegantly painted in Mr. Wyatt's uſual ſtyle of ornamental painting. The box was covered with a dome, in which were placed the royal ſupporters, in gold. Behind their Majeſty's box, were ſeats for their attendants; and, on one ſide, for the Directors and their friends; and, on the other, for the maids of honour. The front of the royal box was decorated with crimſon curtains and valances, fringed and laced with gold. The great dome of the Pantheon was illuminated with additional lamps, innu-

innumerable; and, as this was the firſt performance here, that was honoured by the preſence of their Majeſties, not only the decorations, but the ſplendor of the company, exceeded whatever this beautiful building could boaſt before.

The band of to-night, conſiſting of two hundred of the moſt ſelect performers who had been employed in the Abbey, with the addition of ſignor Paccherotti, the firſt ſinger at the Opera, among the vocal, was led by Mr. Cramer, with his accuſtomed attention and fire. And as the performances in Weſtminſter-Abbey manifeſted, in a wonderful manner, HANDEL's great powers, as an *Eccleſiaſtical* Compoſer, this evening's exhibition was judiciouſly calculated to diſplay his abilities in *Secular*, and *Dramatic*, Muſic.

PART

PART I.

SECOND HAUTBOIS CONCERTO.

THIS Compoſition, played as an Overture to the whole performance, had an admirable effect. The opening is remarkably grand, and accented; and the Largo, with Solo parts for two Violoncellos, and a cantabile part for the Hautbois, quietly accompanied, is very rich in harmony and contrivance; but the double fugue, which firſt appeared among HANDEL's Organ fugues, is upon two of the moſt pleaſing ſubjects, and treated, perhaps, in the moſt clear and maſterly manner, of any inſtrumental fugue that has ever been compoſed. The Minuet and Gavot have conſiderable merit, of a lighter kind, and long delighted the frequenters of our theatres and public places *(a)*.

The ſet of pieces, of which this is one, though called *Hautbois Concertos*, has very few ſolo parts for that inſtrument; moſt of the diviſions, and difficult paſſages, being aſſigned to the principal Violin. Indeed theſe compoſitions, which are more in the ſtyle of Haydn's Symphonies, than modern Hautbois Concertos, with long ſolo parts for the diſplay of abilities on that particular inſtrument, are admirably calculated for a large and powerful band, in which there are performers on various inſtruments, who merit diſtinction.

(a) The Hautbois part of this bold and maſterly Concerto was played by Mr. Kellner, of his Majeſty's military band; a ſcholar of Mr. Fiſcher, who, by his tone and execution, manifeſted himſelf to be a worthy diſciple of ſo great a maſter.

AIR

AIR IN ORLANDO.

Compoſed 1732.

SIGNOR TASCA.

Sorge infauſta una procella
Che oſcurar fa il cielo e il mare,
Splende fauſta poi la ſtella,
Che ogni cor ne fà goder.

Può talor il forte errare
Ma riſorto dall' errore,
Quel, che pria gli diè dolore
Cauſa immenſo il ſuo piaçer.

Though furious ſtorms awhile may rage,
And darkneſs ev'ry hope deny,
The Sun, at length, ſhall fear aſſuage,
And calm at once the heart and ſky.

So men, endow'd with virtue rare,
The lures of vice ſometimes decoy;
Yet, freed from each inſidious ſnare,
Converſion brings unbounded joy.

This is an Air abounding in that ſpecies of ingenious and maſterly contrivance, which generally delights the eye and judgment of deep Muſicians, much more than the public ear. An Opera, however, without ſuch ſpecimens of muſical ſcience, is never had in much reverence by profeſſors. But, ſo changed is the ſtyle of Dramatic Muſic, ſince HANDEL's was produced, that almoſt all his ſongs ſeem *ſcientific*.

CHORUS IN JOSHUA,

First performed 1747.

" *Ye ſons of Iſrael, every tribe attend,*
" *Let grateful Songs and Hymns to Heaven aſcend;*
" *In Gilgal, and on Jordan's banks proclaim*
" *One Firſt, one Great, one Lord Jehovah's name.*"

This Chorus, unexpectedly burſting out of the ſecond movement of the Overture, is of a very beautiful and ſingular kind. The firſt part, to the words, " *Let grateful Songs and Hymns to Hea-* " *ven aſcend,*" is lively and chearful, without vulgarity, and the points of imitation new and pleaſing; but in the laſt part, at the words, " *In Gilgal, and on Jordan's banks proclaim, one Firſt,* " *one Great, one Lord Jehovah's name,*" the compoſition is truly grand, and ſublime; uniting propriety of expreſſion with as much learning and ingenuity of fugue, modulation, accompaniment, and texture of parts, as the art of Muſic can boaſt.

AIR IN SOSARMES.

Compoſed 1732.

Mr. HARRISON.

Rendi il ſereno al ciglio
Madre, non pianger più,
Temer d'alcun periglio
Oggi mai come puoi tù.

May heav'n in pity ſmooth that brow,
And dry a tender parent's tear;
Nor e'er again her heart allow
To ſwell with ſorrow ſo ſevere.

This

This is a ſhort, but pathetic, and ſoothing ſtrain, in a ſlow Siciliana movement, which HANDEL ſeldom fails to make intereſting. I have been told that Strada, for whom this air was originally compoſed, captivated the audience extremely, by her performance of it. Few are now alive who can remember by what peculiar powers of voice or expreſſion ſhe delighted the public in this ſong, fifty-two years ago; though many are the hands that bore teſtimony to the accuracy, purity, and propriety, with which it was ſung by Mr. Harriſon, on the preſent occaſion.

AIR IN RICHARD THE FIRST.

Compoſed 1727.

Miſs CANTELO.

Caro vieni, vieni a me,
Fido vieni; puoi tu caro
Adolcire il duolo amaro
Di chi pena ſol per te.

Penſa, penſa alla mia fè,
Penſa ancor al mio martir,
Ed a tanti miei ſoſpir
Sarai ſolo la mercè.

Ah! come, and kindly eaſe my heart
Of all its pains, of all its fears;
Ah! faithful come, and joy impart,
Nor longer leave me thus in tears.

Think of my conſtancy and love,
Think of my unremitting woes;
Ah! come in ſmiles, and inſtant prove
How well, for thee, I loſt repoſe.

This is an innocent, ſimple kind of Air, which requires no great abilities to perform, or ſcience to hear. A pleaſing well-toned voice, free from the Engliſh brogue and vulgarity, is all that is neceſſary to the ſinger; and a diſpoſition to be pleaſed with muſical tones, to the hearer. Miſs Cantelo certainly brought the one to the Pantheon, and found the other there. Nothing can prove more clearly the difference of ſtyle in ſinging this ſpecies of Air, fifty years ago, than the ſhake which Cuzzoni made on the firſt note, and almoſt always on the word *caro*, wherever it occurred. A good ſhake, well applied, is certainly one of the firſt embelliſhments of good ſinging; but when injudiciouſly uſed, it is pert and unmeaning. Shakes are now ſparingly uſed by the few who are able to make them, except at a cloſe, and in old-faſhioned French ſinging.

CHORUS, FROM ISRAEL IN EGYPT.

Compoſed 1738.

"*He ſmote all the firſt-born of Egypt, the chief of all their* "*ſtrength*, Pſ. lxxvii. 52. *But as for his people, he led them forth* "*like ſheep*, Ibid. 53. *He brought them out with ſilver and gold,* "*there was not one feeble perſon in all their tribes.*" Pſ. cv. 36.

Unimpaſſioned narrative ſupplies a compoſer with few opportunities of muſical expreſſion, or with that ſpecies of imitation, where the *ſound* can, with propriety, be made *an echo* to the ſenſe. But HANDEL, in the firſt movement of this admirable Chorus on two pleaſing and uncommon ſubjects, in the accompaniments, which only mark the accented parts of each bar, has excited an idea of *ſmiting*, and of *blows*. And in the courſe of this cloſe and regular

regular double fugue, when he gives the inſtruments more to do, he produces the ſame effects by ſhort elementary ſounds aſſigned to the voices, in plain counterpoint. The ſecond movement; "*He "led them forth like ſheep,*" is of a paſtoral caſt, with a mixture of fugue, and a termination, in cloſe, compact, and well arranged full harmony, of ſyllabic counterpoint, or note againſt note.

AIR IN JULIUS CÆSAR.

Compoſed in 1723.

Signor PACCHIEROTTI.

Va tacito e naſcoſto
Quand' avido è di preda
L' aſtuto cacciator.

Così chi è al mal diſpoſto,
Non brama, ch' alcun veda
L'Inganno del ſuo cor.

The wiley ſportſman in purſuit of game,
Unſeen, and ſilent, takes his aim;
So he whom malice prompts to baſe deſigns,
With equal art, his plans combines.

Whoever is able to read a *ſcore*, and knows the difficulty of writing in five real parts, muſt admire the reſources which HANDEL has manifeſted in this. The French-horn part, which is almoſt a perpetual echo to the voice, has never been equalled in any Air, ſo accompanied, that I remember. Few great ſingers are partial to ſongs in which the melody and importance are ſo equally divided; but this Air was choſen to do honour to the abilities of HANDEL, on a day when they were to ſhine in full ſplendor.

And

And ſignor Pacchierotti, by his judicious choice and excellent performance, at once contributed to the blaze of this great compoſer's reputation, and his own.

SIXTH GRAND CONCERTO.

The firſt movement is ſolemn and ſorrowful; and the fugue, remarkably curious in ſubject; which is ſo unobvious and difficult to work, that no compoſer of ordinary abilities, in this learned ſpecies of writing, would have ventured to meddle with it, if ſuch an unnatural ſeries of ſounds had occurred to him. The muſette, or, rather chaconne, in this Concerto, was always in favour with the compoſer himſelf, as well as the public; for I well remember, that HANDEL frequently introduced it between the parts of his Oratorios, both before and after publication. Indeed, no inſtrumental compoſition which I had ever heard during the long favour of this, ſeemed to me more grateful and pleaſing, particularly, in ſubject: the ſolo parts and diviſions were not very new, at the time they occurred to HANDEL in this movement; but, probably, they render the return to the firſt theme the more welcome. To the reſt of the Concerto, which was omitted in this performance, little praiſe is due, and, indeed, this ſeemed to be HANDEL's own opinion; as the two laſt movements were frequently omitted in performance, under his own direction.

AIR IN ATALANTA.

Compoſed 1736.

MADAME MARA.

M'allontano ſdegnoſe pupille
Per vedervi più liete, e ſerene,
E perch' abbian le voſtre faville
Nudrimento minore di pene.

Awhile I retire from your ſcorn and diſdain,
Nor with ſpleen or reſentment upbraid;
In hopes that by love, both my patience and pain
Will, with int'reſt, in future be paid.

This Air, which was originally ſet for the celebrated Conti, *detto Gizziello*, from Gizzi, a famous ſinger, and, afterwards, ſinging-maſter, of whom he learned his art, though it requires in the ſinger no uncommon extent of voice, pathos, or execution, yet, by the grace, elegant ſimplicity, and ſweetneſs, as well as power of voice, with which Madame Mara ſung this pleaſing ſong, ſhe fortified the great reputation which ſhe brought into this country, and which ſhe had realized, and ſo much increaſed, by her performance in Weſtminſter-Abbey. This Air, in which the baſe and other accompaniments are as quiet and ſimple as thoſe of Haſſe and Vinci, of the ſame period; ſhews, that when HANDEL choſe to make the ſinger more important than the Orcheſtra, the taſk was not difficult.

CHORUS

CHORUS IN ISRAEL IN EGYPT.

Compoſed 1738.

" *He gave them hailſtones for rain*; Pſ. cv. 32. *Fire mingled* " *with the hail, ran along upon the ground.*" Exod. ix. 23, 24.

This ſpirited and maſterly movement, which was clamorouſly called for, a ſecond time, is written *a due Cori*. It is one of the few Choruſes, compoſed by HANDEL, in which there is no fugue, or point of imitation, except in the echos of the two choirs; but, *en revanche*, the inſtrumental parts are ſo active, and full, without occaſioning the leaſt confuſion, that, if the eight voice parts were ſilent, the accompaniments might be played with good effect, as a movement in a Concerto: a circumſtance difficult to point out, in the works of any other compoſer, than HANDEL.

PART

PART II.

FIFTH GRAND CONCERTO.

THE opening of this piece always impreſſed me with the idea of its being the moſt ſpirited and characteriſtic of all the movements that were written by HANDEL, or any other compoſer, on Lulli's model of Opera Overture; which ſeems to require a convulſive, determined, and military caſt. The two following movements, of which only the firſt was played, contain little more than the light and common-place paſſages of the times. The *Largo*, however, is an excellent piece of harmony and modulation, in Corelli's natural and ſober ſtyle; and, in the next movement, we have a very early ſpecimen of the ſymphonic ſtyle of Italy, in which rapid iterations of the ſame note are deſigned to contraſt with ſomething better, if not mere noiſe and *rempliſſage*, totally devoid of meaning, of which there are but too frequent inſtances. The ſubject of HANDEL's movement is modern, marked, and pleaſing; and the baſe accompaniment of his iterations, bold and intereſting. The finale, or minuet of this Concerto, has been ſo much admired by Engliſh compoſers of HANDEL's ſchool, as to have been frequently thought worthy of imitation.

AIR IN PTOLEMY.

Compoſed 1728.

Miſs ABRAMS.

Dite che fà
Dove è l'idol mio,
Selvaggie deità
Dite dov' è
Il mio teſoro?
A me voi lo rendete
O pur ſe lo vedete
Ditegli per pietà
Che per lui moro.
O rendetelo al mio cor;
Dite che tutto amor,
Soſpiro anch' io.

Where is my Love? and how employ'd?
Ye Fauns and Dryads ſay;
If to your rural haunts decoy'd,
Aloud repeat my lay.

In pity tell him ev'ry pain,
Each groan and riſing ſigh;
That far from him I life diſdain,
And only wiſh to die.

Ye ruſtic gods, oh tell him this,
Or bring him here to crown my bliſs.
Where is my Love? &c.

This air, which is pleaſing, and modern in melody, for one that has fifty-ſix years on its head, is called the *Echo Song*, in the printed copy; and ſaid to have been ſung by Signora Cuzzoni, and Signor Seneſino. So few paſſages, however, are repeated, and

and thoſe chiefly in the ſecond part, that it had a very good effect, as a ſolo ſong, from the taſte and expreſſion with which it was ſung by Miſs Abrams.

AIR IN EZIO, or ÆTIUS.

Compoſed 1732.

Signor BARTOLINI.

Vi fida lo ſpoſo
Vi fida il regnante,
Dubbioſo,
Ed amante
La vita,
E l'amor.
Tu, amico, prepara
Soccorſo, ed aita:
Tu ſerbami, O cara,
Gli affetti del cor.

To thee I confide
My empire and bride;
And, in doubt while I rove,
My life, and my love:—
Do thou, my dear friend,
Aſſiſtance prepare—
While on thee I depend
Thy affection to ſhare.

This Air, which is in a ſtyle peculiar to HANDEL, and the period in which he flouriſhed, has, perhaps, been robbed a little of its beauty and grace, by time; it, however, filled up its niche in the Pantheon, with the aſſiſtance of Signor Bartolini, very agreeably. For my own part, who wiſh that whatever is good in its

kind may live, and have a ſhare of attention and favour, I confeſs, that a compoſition is the more curious, and welcome to my ears, in proportion as it *differs* from the Muſic in common uſe.

CHORUS IN JUDAS MACCHABÆUS,

Compoſed 1746.

Fall'n is the foe,
So fall thy foes, O Lord,
Where warlike Judas wields his righteous ſword.

This ſpirited, original, and excellent Chorus, which can never paſs without honourable notice in any performance, received great force and energy from the manner in which it was executed to-night.

OVERTURE IN ARIADNE.

Compoſed 1734.

The great favour which this Overture ſo long enjoyed, particularly the *Minuet*, was here revived, and a new leaſe of longevity granted to it by HANDEL's *executors*. The number of French horns employed on this occaſion very much enriched the harmony, and gave to the effect of this Air, unuſual ſplendor and magnificence.

ACCOMPANIED RECITATIVE IN JULIUS CÆSAR.

Compoſed 1723.

Signor PACCHIEROTTI.

Alma del gran Pompeo,
Che al cener ſuo d'intorno

Inviſibil

Invisibil t'aggiri,
Fur ombra i tuoi trofei,
Ombra la tua grandezza, e un ombra sei!
Così termina al fine il fasto umano!
Jeri chi vivo occupò un mondo in guerra,
Oggi, risolto in polve, un urna serra!
Tal di ciascuno, ahi lasso!
Il principio è di terra
E il fine un sasso!
Misera vita! O quanto è fral tuo stato!
Ti forma un soffio, e ti distrugge un fiato.

These are thy ashes, Pompey, this the mound,
Thy soul, invisible, is hovering round!
Thy splendid trophies, and thy honours fade,
Thy grandeur, like thyself, is now a shade.
Thus fare the hopes in which we most confide,
And thus the efforts end of human pride!
What yesterday could hold the world in chains,
To-day, transform'd to dust, an urn contains.
Such is the fate of all, from cot to throne,
Our origin is earth, our end a stone!
Ah wretched life! how frail and short thy joys!
A breath creates thee, and a breath destroys.

This admirable soliloquy of Cæsar over the ashes of Pompey, I have been frequently told by persons equally well skilled in Music and the Italian tongue, had an effect, when recited on the stage by Senesino, which no Recitative, or even Air, had before, in this country. But though delivered by Signor Pacchierotti, with the true energy and expression of heroic Recitative, for which he is so much celebrated in Italy by the best judges of the poetry and musical declamation of that country, had not the attention

tention or ſucceſs it deſerved here, detached from its place in the Opera, and printed without a tranſlation. Indeed, the audience, fatigued with the ſtruggles for admiſſion, the preſſure of the croud in their ſeats, and relaxed by the accumulated heat of the weather and company, were neither ſo attentive to the performers, nor willing to be pleaſed by their exertions, as in Weſtminſter-Abbey.

RECITATIVE, which Engliſhmen, unacquainted with the Italian language, always wiſh as ſhort as poſſible, is thought of ſuch importance, in Italy, that it ſeems to include the carriage and geſtures, as well as elocution of an Opera ſinger: for when it is ſaid of one, *recita bene*, it is underſtood that *he*, or *ſhe*, not only ſpeaks Recitative well, but is a good *actor*, or *actreſs*.

Tartini *(a)* gives an account of a piece of Recitative that was performed in an Opera at Ancona, in 1714, which had a very extraordinary effect on the profeſſors employed in it, as well as the audience; for though it had no other accompaniment than a baſe, and conſiſted of only one line, it occaſioned ſuch agitation in all who heard it, that they trembled, turned pale, and regarded each other with fear and aſtoniſhment. And theſe extraordinary effects did not ariſe from complaints, ſorrow, or tragic pathos of any uncommon kind; but from indignation, and an undefinable ſpecies of rigid ſeverity and penetrating harſhneſs in the ſentiments of the words, the power of which was greatly augmented and enforced, both by the compoſer and performer. "During thirteen repreſentations of "this Drama," continues the intelligent and excellent Muſician who has recorded theſe powers of Recitative, "the effect was "ſtill the ſame; and, after the firſt night, this terrible ſcene was "conſtantly expected with the moſt profound ſilence."

(a) Trattato di Muſica, cap. v. p. 135.

An

An attention little inferior to this, according to tradition, was beſtowed upon the ſcene in Julius Cæſar, when performed in England. The tranſlation may, perhaps, convey ſome faint idea of the original words; nothing, however, but the Muſic itſelf, and the recitation of ſuch a performer as Seneſino, or Pacchierotti, can do juſtice to HANDEL's merit in ſetting them. Indeed, it is the fineſt piece of accompanied Recitative, without intervening ſymphonies, with which I am acquainted. The modulation is learned, and ſo uncommon, that there is hardly a chord which the ear expects; and yet the words are well expreſſed, and the phraſes pathetic and pleaſing.

This Recitative was followed by one of HANDEL's moſt celebrated pathetic Airs:

AIR IN OTHO,

Compoſed 1722.

Signor PACCHIEROTTI.

Affanni del penſier,
Un ſol momento,
Datemi pace almen
E poi tornate.
Ah! che nel meſto ſen
Io gia vi ſento
Che oſtinati la pace,
A me turbate.

Afflicting thoughts, a ſhort reprieve
In pity grant,
And then return;
But ah! for ever, I perceive,
My heart will pant
My boſom burn.

This

This exquiſite Air was compoſed for Cuzzoni. Both the ſong, and her performance of it, were greatly admired by the beſt judges of the times; and it is not, perhaps, eaſy to find an Air of greater merit in any one of HANDEL's Italian operas. The melody is purely Sicilian; and though the inſtrumental parts are moving in ſtrict fugue, almoſt throughout, it is as free and unembarraſſed, as if it was accompanied in ſimple counterpoint. It is ſo high as not to be in the pleaſanteſt part of Signor Pacchierotti's voice: and, though he ſung it with great feeling and expreſſion, it was not taſted by the audience in the manner it deſerved.

AIR IN EZIO.

Compoſed 1732.

Signor TASCA.

Naſce al boſco in rozza cuna
Un felice paſtorello,
E con l'aure di fortuna,
Giunge i regni a dominar.
Preſſo al trono in regie faſce
Sventurato un altro naſce,
E fra l'ire della ſorte,
Va gli armenti a paſcolar.

Sometimes a happy ruſtic ſwain,
In cottage born, of humble ſtem,
Acquires with little toil and pain,
Through Fortune's ſmiles, a diadem.
While he that's blaſted by her frown
To dire miſchance is ſure decreed;
And, though entitled to a crown,
A field may till, or flock may feed.

This

This is one of the moſt agreeable baſe ſongs that I know. The melody is pleaſing, and accompaniment ingenious and ſpirited. And though the life of a muſical compoſition is in general much ſhorter than that of man, yet this bears its age ſo well, that inſtead of fifty-two years old, it ſeems in all the vigour and bloom of youth. It was compoſed for Montagnano, one of the moſt celebrated baſe ſingers in HANDEL's ſervice, when that ſpecies of voice was more in faſhion, and perhaps more cultivated, than at preſent. The diviſions require conſiderable flexibility, and the compaſs great extent of voice; both of which were well ſupplied by Signor Taſca.

DUET, IN RODELINDA,

Compoſed in 1725.

Madame MARA, and Signor BARTOLINI.

A 2. *Io t'abbraccio;*
E più che morte
Aſpro e forte,
E' pe'l cor mio
Queſto addio
Che il tuo ſen dal mio divide.

Solo. *Ah mia vita!*

Sola. *Ah mio teſoro!*

A 2. *Se non moro,*
E' più tiranno
Queſt' affanno,
Che da morte, e non uccide.

A 2. This laſt embrace is worſe than death,
Without the loſs of ſenſe or breath;
What torture to a faithful heart,
From all that's dear, thus forc'd to part?

Solo. My love!
Sola. My life!
Solo. My only hope!
Sola. My faithful wife!
A 2. { How barbarous is a tyrant's will,
Which death can give, yet does not kill!

The opening of modern Duets is generally more in Dialogue, and, perhaps, more dramatic, than was in fashion fifty or sixty years ago. Yet I am acquainted with no Duet upon the same model which pleases me more than this. It was introduced, with several of HANDEL's songs in a *pasticcio* Opera called *Lucio Vero*, in 1748; and I never was more delighted than with the performance of it, particularly where the composer, in the course of his modulation, has made such a happy use of the sharp seventh of each new key, enforced by the instruments, in a manner which was then totally new to my ears. There is not a passage, or point of imitation, in this Duet, which breathes not grace and dignity; and so far is the whole composition from discovering its age, that it seems of a kind which must be immortal, or at least an evergreen; which, however times and seasons vary, remains fresh and blooming as long as it exists.

XIth GRAND CONCERTO.

The first movement of this Concerto, though masterly, and built on a solid foundation, is uncommonly wild and capricious for the time when it was composed; the fugue is on a marked and active subject, which reminds us a little of some of our author's other instrumental fugues; but the symphony, or introduction, of the *andante*, is extremely pleasing; and no less remarkable for its grace, than the boldness with which the composer, in order to bring in the answers to points of imitation, has used

double

double diſcords, *unprepared*. The Solo parts of this movement were thought more brilliant, than eaſy and natural to the bow and finger-board, forty-years ago. Indeed the laſt *Allegro*, which is airy and fanciful, has Solo parts that ſeem more likely to have preſented themſelves to the author at a harpſichord, than with a violin in his hand; however, the whole Concerto was played in a very chaſte and ſuperior manner, by Mr. Cramer; and it is but juſtice to this great performer to ſay, that with a hand which defies every poſſible difficulty, he plays the productions of old maſters with a reverential purity and ſimplicity, that reflect equal honour upon his judgment, good taſte, and underſtanding.

AIR IN ALCINA,

Compoſed in 1735.

Madame MARA.

Ah! mio cor! ſchernito ſei?
Stelle! Dei! nume d'amore?
Traditore! t'amo tanto,
Puoi laſciarmi ſola in pianto?
Oh Dei! perche?
Ma che fà gemendo Alcina?
Son regina, e temo ancora?
Reſti, o mora.
Pene ſempre,
O torni a me.
Ah! mio cor! &c.

Alas! my heart! thou art now deſpis'd!—
Ye pow'rs that move
Our hate and love,
Is this the way my paſſion's priz'd?
Left by a wretch, whoſe heart of ſteel
Is dead to all I ſay or feel.

But why let grief my ſoul devour?
I'm ſtill a queen, and ſtill have pow'r;
Which pow'r my vengeance ſoon ſhall guide,
If ſtill my kindneſs he deride.
Alas! my heart! &c.

This ſong was always as much admired for its compoſition, as Strada for her manner of ſinging it, when the Opera of Alcina firſt appeared *(a)*. Perhaps a modern compoſer, from the rage into which the enchantreſs is thrown in the Drama, by diſcovering the intended departure of her favourite hero, Rogero, would have given the lady leſs tenderneſs, and more paſſion; however that may be, the firſt ſtrain of this Air, upon a continued moving baſe, is truly pathetic; and the conſtant ſobs and ſighs, expreſſed by ſhort and broken notes in the violin and tenor parts, greatly add to this effect. Indeed, this movement contains ſome ſtrokes of modulation which are extremely bold and pathetic, particularly at the words *ſola in pianto*. The ſhort ſecond part likewiſe expreſſes much of the ſpirit, agitation, and fury, which the words and ſituation of the ſinger ſeem to require. If any one of the three ſurviving original performers in Alcina was preſent in the Pantheon during the performance of this Air, I cannot help ſuppoſing, that, in ſpite of partiality for old times, and reverence for Strada, he, or ſhe would have agreed with the reſt of the audience, in greatly applauding madame Mara's manner of ſinging this impaſſioned and difficult Air.

(a) Though near fifty years are elapſed ſince, yet there are three of the original performers in that Drama ſtill living: Mrs. Arne, widow of the late Dr. Arne, who was at that time a ſcholar of Geminiani, and is called Mrs. Young, in the printed books; Mr. Savage, late ſub-almoner, and vicar-choral of St. Paul's, who in the printed copy of the Muſic, is called *the boy*, and in the book of the words, *young Mr. Savage*; and Mr. Beard, ſo long the favourite ſinger, and, afterwards, manager in one of our theatres.

ANTHEM.

A N T H E M.

Compoſed for the Coronation of King GEORGE the Second, 1727.

" *My heart is inditing of a good matter*; *I ſpeak of the things* " *which I have made unto the king.* Pſ. xlv. 1.

" *Kings daughters were among thy honourable women.* Ibid. 10.

" *Upon thy right hand did ſtand the queen in veſture of gold*; " *and the king ſhall have pleaſure in thy beauty.* Ib. 12.

" *Kings ſhall be thy nurſing fathers, and queens thy nurſing* " *mothers.*" Iſaiah xlix. 23.

This moſt pleaſing and admirable compoſition, the work of HANDEL's youth and leiſure, contains ſo many peculiar beauties, that an enthuſiaſtic commentator might fill a conſiderable volume in pointing them out. I ſhall try, however, in examining the ſcore, to moderate my admiration more than I was able to do at its performance.

Of the firſt movement, the melody is remarkably well accented and pleaſing; and the accompaniment clear, ingenious, and maſterly. There is a dignity and ſobriety in the movement and effect of the whole, well ſuited to compoſitions *à Capella*; however, this is ſo much in HANDEL's *own* ſtyle, that no recollection is awakened, either in the hearer or reader, of any other production, eccleſiaſtical or ſecular.

Indeed, nothing can exceed the ſeveral ſpecies of excellence with which this movement is replete, except that which immediately follows it:

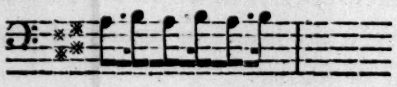
" *Kings daughters are among thy honourable women:*" which, not only ſixty years ago was more original, but which ſtill remains

mains unrivalled and uncommon. Here a natural and beautiful melody is equally and artfully divided among the ſeveral principal voice-parts; while the violin accompaniments, in a different ſtyle of beautiful melody, are ſo far from occaſioning confuſion, that they help to unite and cement the whole together. The majeſtic and regular movement of the baſe upon which ſuch an admirable ſtructure is built, muſt ſtrike judges of compoſition with as much wonder, as uninſtructed lovers of Muſic with delight.

The third movement, "*Upon thy right hand*," &c. is as graceful in melody as rich in harmony; and as new as if compoſed but yeſterday, except in one favourite paſſage with HANDEL and his times, which being now a little *paſſé*, is, perhaps, too often repeated for modern hearers *(a)*.

The fourth, and laſt movement, "*Kings ſhall be thy nurſing fathers*," is a full Chorus, big with all the fire, contrivance, rich harmony, and energy of genius, which HANDEL afterwards diſplayed in his beſt Oratorio Choruſes. And this was the *finale* of the admirable miſcellaneous concert of *Commemoration*; which if an exhibition of yet greater magnificence had not been given elſewhere, would have been ſtill more admired, and worthy of celebrity.

(a) This is the paſſage: which, in the courſe of the movement, occupies upwards of thirty bars.



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Published 29 May 1784

COMMEMORATION

OF

HANDEL.

THIRD PERFORMANCE

IN

WESTMINSTER-ABBEY,

On FRIDAY, May 29, 1784.

FOR THE

MESSIAH.



COMMEMORATION

OF

HANDEL.

THIRD PERFORMANCE;

WESTMINSTER-ABBEY,

SATURDAY, May 29, 1784.

THE

MESSIAH.

THOUGH the company which attended this day's performance was conſiderably more numerous than that of Wedneſday, yet, by the experience acquired, and meaſures purſued, ſuch good order reigned in every department, that it was impoſſible to enter or quit a public place, of any kind, with more facility, or to be ſeated more commodiouſly, when there, than at this magnificent exhibition. And though the chief part of the audience, by coming early, had a long period to fill up, yet, ſuffering no inconvenience from numbers, heat, or cold; and having a building ſo venerable, ſo fitted up, and ſo filled, to examine, all the languor, laſſitude, and tediouſneſs were kept off, which uſually ſeize both body and mind in public places, before the long expected pleaſure arrives. The very filling the Abbey with ſuch company, and the Orcheſtra with ſuch performers, was a new, varied, and amuſing ſpectacle, before the arrival of their Majeſties and their beautiful offspring crowned the whole, and rendered the *enſemble* as enchanting to the eye, as ſuch ſublime Muſic, ſo exquiſitely performed, muſt have been to every ear.

PART I.

THE Overture to the MESSIAH, though grave and ſolemn, always ſeemed to me more dry and unintereſting in the performance, than the reſt of HANDEL's Overtures; but the force, energy, and dignity, given to every trait of melody, as well as maſs of harmony, by this wonderful band, produced effects in it, which elude all deſcription.

HANDEL's Overtures are generally analogous to the opening of the firſt ſcene of the Drama to which they belong, and may be called real prefaces or preliminary diſcourſes to a book. In order therefore to ſuppreſs every idea of levity in ſo ſacred a performance as the MESSIAH, he very judiciouſly finiſhed the Overture without an Air. And the ſhort ſymphony to the accompanied Recitative, or *Aria parlante*, "*Comfort ye my people*," (Iſai. xl. 1.) ſeems to ſuch as are not acquainted with the Oratorio, a preparation for the light minuet, gavot, or jig, with which Overtures are uſually terminated; but how exquiſitely are judicious ears diſappointed! Indeed, I am acquainted with no movement of the ſame caſt, to the words of any language, which is more grateful and ſoothing than this. There is not a note, either in the principal melody or accompaniment, that is become vulgar, common, or unmeaning. Mr. Harriſon, with his ſweet and well-toned voice, did this Recitative and the following Air great juſtice, by delivering them

them with propriety and the utmoſt purity and truth of intonation *(a)*.

The Air, "*But who may abide the day of his coming,*" (Mal. iii. 2.) is in a Sicilian paſtoral ſtyle, of which HANDEL was very fond, and in which he was almoſt always ſucceſsful. And the Chorus: "*And he ſhall purify the ſons of Levi,* is of a peculiar caſt: each ſpecies of voice delivering the primitive ſubject, unaccompanied by the reſt, till the counter-ſubject, in ligature, or binding-notes, is introduced, which adds to the effect of the whole, when the inſtruments come in, and all the voices, quitting the mazes of fugue, unite in ſimple counterpoint.

There is a very curious expreſſion of the words attempted in the Air: *The people who walked in darkneſs have ſeen a great light*; (Iſai. ix. 2.) where the chromatic and indeterminate modulation, ſeems to delineate the uncertain footſteps of perſons exploring their way in obſcurity. Whether this imitation is obvious, or poſſible to be made ſo, I know not; but there is merit in the attempt, when it involves no abſurdity.

During the performance of this Oratorio, I made three ſeveral pencil-marks, expreſſive of the degrees of comparative good with which my ears were affected, by particular movements; and I found the ſign of ſuperlative excellence ſtamped on the Chorus:

(a) HANDEL has certainly manifeſted great knowledge of the ſentiments and import of the words he had to expreſs in this Oratorio, though, when he ſet them, he was not perfectly acquainted with the pronunciation of our language: as, in the firſt Recitative, he has made a monoſyllable of *cryeth*; in the firſt Chorus frequently allows but one note to the word *Glory*; and in the ſecond Chorus of the ſecond part, he has made the word *ſurely* a triſyllable. This great maſter, with all his muſical riches and fertility of invention, was frequently obliged to be œconomical in his compoſitions as well as his affairs: and, when he was preſſed for time, he often applied words to Muſic, inſtead of Muſic to words; taking from its niche, or his port-folio, a movement already compoſed. Perhaps this was the caſe with the firſt Chorus: *The glory of the Lord*; which, however, is an excellent compoſition, and had a fine effect in the performance.

For unto us a child is born, (Iſai. ix. 6.); which has ſo much merit of various kinds, that I know not where to begin to praiſe it. The ſubjects of fugue are ſo agreeable; the violin accompaniments of ſuch a peculiar character; and the clearneſs and facility which reign through the whole ſo uncommon, that each of them deſerves to be particularly remarked; but at every introduction of the words "*Wonderful! Counſellor! the mighty God! the everlaſting Fa-*"*ther! the Prince of peace!*" which he ſo long and ſo judiciouſly poſtponed, the idea and effect are ſo truly ſublime, that, aſſiſted by the grandeur and energy of this band, I never felt the power of Choral Muſic and full harmony, in enforcing the expreſſion of words, ſo ſtrongly before. There is poetry of the higheſt claſs in the Muſic, as well as the words, of this Chorus.

The PASTORAL SYMPHONY which followed this *high-ſounding* Chorus, played without wind-inſtruments by violins only, in the moſt ſubdued manner, was balmy and delicious! The pianos or whiſpers of ſuch multiplied ſounds, produced a ſweetneſs of ſo new and exquiſite a kind, that the muſical *technica* furniſhes no terms adequate to their effects.

RECITATIVE.

"*There were ſhepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch* "*over their flock by night.*" Luke ii. 8.

RECITATIVE accompanied.

"*And, lo! an Angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory* "*of the Lord ſhone around them, and they were ſore afraid.*" Matth. iii. 17. Luke ii. 9.

RECITATIVE.

"*And the Angel ſaith unto them, Fear not; for, behold! I* "*bring you good tidings of great joy, which ſhall be to all people;*

"*for*

" *for unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour,*
" *which is Chriſt the Lord.*" Luke ii. 10, 11.

RECITATIVE accompanied.

" *And ſuddenly there was with the Angel a multitude of the*
" *Heavenly Hoſt, praiſing God, and ſaying.*" Ibid. 13.

Theſe Recitatives, as delivered by the ſweet voice and articulate pronunciation of Madame Mara, had an effect far beyond what might be expected from ſuch few and ſimple notes, without air, or meaſure: they were literally made " *melting ſounds,*" to every hearer of ſenſibility preſent. And the magnificent Chorus, " *Glory be*
" *to God in the higheſt! and peace on earth, good-will towards*
" *men!*" (Ibid. 14.) in which the *pianos* and *fortes* were admirably marked and obſerved, never had ſo great an effect before, in any performance within my knowledge. There is more *claire obſcure* in this ſhort Chorus than perhaps had ever been attempted at the time it was compoſed. The anſwers to the fugue ſucceeding each other ſo clearly and cloſely at the words " *good-will towards*
" *men,*" muſt always pleaſe artiſts, who know the ingenuity and merit of ſuch contrivances; but the general effects of this Chorus want nothing in the ignorant, but attention and feeling, to afford them unaccountable delight. " *Rejoice greatly, O daughter*
" *of Zion; ſhout! O daughter of Jeruſalem; behold! thy king*
" *cometh unto thee.* Zechariah ix. 9.

" *He is the righteous Saviour, and he ſhall ſpeak peace unto the*
" *Heathen.*" Ibid. 10.

This brilliant and difficult Air afforded Madame Mara an opportunity of diſplaying ſome of her wonderful powers of execution, and ſhewed her in a very different light from any thing ſhe had

had hitherto ſung at the Commemoration; but ſo firm, ſweet, and judicious, was her performance of every kind, and ſo delightful to the audience, that ſhe never breathed a ſound without effect.

"*He ſhall feed his flock like a ſhepherd,*" (Iſai. xl. 11.) is an Air in HANDEL's beſt *Siciliana* ſtyle, and has ever been in great favour with performers and hearers: Guadagni, after Mrs. Cibber, eſtabliſhed its reputation. It is ſimilar in movement to the lulling paſtoral at the end of Corelli's Eighth Concerto, "*Fatto per la notte di natale,*" and had a pleaſing effect from the performance of Signor Bartolini, and Miſs Cantelo.

PART

PART II.

THE Second Part of this divine Oratorio abounds in ſo many beauties of compoſition and effect, that I find one of my three marks affixed to almoſt every movement. The Chorus, "*Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the ſins of the* "*world,*" (St. John i. 29.) has the ſingle ſtamp of ſolemnity; but the Air, "*He was deſpiſed and rejected of men,*" (Iſai. liii. 3.) has ever impreſſed me with the higheſt idea of excellence in pathetic expreſſion, of any Engliſh ſong with which I am acquainted. "*Surely* "*he hath borne our griefs,*" (Ibid. l. 4, 5.) is an admirable piece of learned counterpoint and modulation, and very expreſſive of the words. The ſubſequent *alla breve* fugue, to the words "*And with* "*his ſtripes we are healed,*" is written upon a fine ſubject, with ſuch clearneſs and regularity as was never ſurpaſſed by the greateſt Choral compoſers of the ſixteenth century. This fugue, which is purely vocal, and *à Capella*, as the inſtruments have no other buſineſs aſſigned them than that of doubling and enforcing the voice-parts, may fairly be compared with movements of the ſame kind in Paleſtrina, Tallis, and Bird, which, in variety, it very much ſurpaſſes.

CHORUS.

"*All we, like ſheep, have gone aſtray; we have turned every* "*one to his own way.*" Iſai. liii. 6.

This Chorus has a ſpirit, and beauties of compoſition, of a quite different kind: the baſe is *coſtretto*, and moving inceſſantly in quavers,

quavers, while the voice-parts and violins expreſs a roving, careleſs kind of paſtoral wildneſs, which is very characteriſtic of the words. "*And the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.*" Iſai. liii. 6. This fragment is full of ſorrow and contrition.

The words of the admirable choral fugue: "*He truſted in* "*God that he would deliver him; let him deliver him, if he delight* "*in him,*" (Matth. xxvii. 43. and Pſal. xxii. 8.) which contain the triumphal inſolence, and are prophetic of the contumelious language of the Jews, during the crucifixion of our Saviour, were very difficult to expreſs; however, HANDEL, availing himſelf in the moſt maſterly manner of the advantage of fugue and imitation, has given them the effect, not of the taunts and preſumption of an individual, but the ſcoffs and ſcorn of a confuſed multitude *(a)*.

"*Thy rebuke hath broken his heart; he is full of heavineſs: he* "*looked for ſome to have pity on him, but there was no man, neither* "*found he any to comfort him.*" (Pſal. lxix. 21.) This is a piece of accompanied Recitative of the pathetic kind, no leſs honourable to the Compoſer's feeling, than muſical learning and recondite modulation: and all the ſorrowful caſt and expreſſion of that and the Air which follows it: "*Behold and ſee, if there be any ſorrow* "*like unto his ſorrow!*" (Lam. of Jeremiah, i. 12.) were well preſerved by the performance of Mr. Norris.

The happy conſtruction of Weſtminſter-Abbey for cheriſhing and preſerving muſical tones, by a gentle augmentation without echo or repetition, was demonſtrated by no part of the performance more clearly than in that of Miſs Abrams; whoſe voice,

(a) He was ſo conſcious of the merit of this movement, that he frequently performed it on key'd-inſtruments, as a leſſon; and if he was preſſed to ſit down to play at ſuch times as he felt no immediate impulſe, this theme uſually preſented itſelf to his mind; when, making it the ſubject of extempore fugue and voluntary, it never failed to inſpire him with the moſt ſublime ideas, and wonderful ſallies of imagination.

though

though ſweet and of a good quality, is not regarded as Theatrical, but ſuch as the Italians denominate *Voce di Camera*. Yet, in ſinging the pleaſing Air, " *But thou didſt not leave his ſoul in hell,*" (Pſ. xvi. 11.) which ſhe did with conſiderable taſte and expreſſion, her voice was rendered more audible in every part of that immenſe building, than it has ever been in any Concert-Room in London.

CHORUS.

" *Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlaſt-*
" *ing doors, and the King of Glory ſhall come in!*" Pſal. xxiv. 7.

SEMI-CHORUS.

" *Who is this King of Glory?*

SEMI-CHORUS.

" *The Lord ſtrong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle.*

SEMI-CHORUS.

" *Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlaſt-*
" *ing doors, and the King of Glory ſhall come in!*

SEMI-CHORUS.

" *Who is this King of Glory?*

SEMI-CHORUS.

" *The Lord of Hoſts; he is the King of Glory.*

CHORUS.

" *The Lord of Hoſts; he is the King of Glory.*"

All theſe words are admirably expreſſed, and the contraſted effects of Semi-Chorus and Chorus, were never more ſtriking than in the performance of to-day.

CHORUS.

" *Let all the Angels of God worſhip him.*" Heb. i. 6.

This ſpirited fugue, ſeemingly on two ſubjects, is, perhaps, the moſt artificial that has been compoſed in modern times. HANDEL, in order to exerciſe his abilities in every ſpecies of difficulty which the moſt learned and elaborate Canoniſts and Fughiſts of the fifteenth and ſixteenth centuries were ambitious of vanquiſhing, has compoſed this movement in what ancient theoriſts called *minor Prolation*; in which the reply to a ſubject given, though in ſimilar intervals, is made in notes of different value: as when the theme is led off in ſemibreves and anſwered in minims, or the contrary *(a)*.

" *The Lord gave the word; great was the company of the preachers.*" Pſal. lxvii. 11.

The majeſty and dignity of the few ſolemn notes with which this Chorus is begun, without inſtruments, received great augmentation now, from being delivered by ſuch a number of baſe and tenor voices in uniſon; and the contraſt of ſenſation occaſioned by the harmony and activity of the ſeveral parts, afterwards, had a very ſtriking effect.

" *How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the goſpel of* " *peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!*" (Iſai. lii. 7. and Rom. x. 15.) is a very pleaſing Air, *alla Siciliana*, which Signor Bartolini

(a) As it is only profeſſors who can eſtimate the difficulty of finding a ſubject which will ſerve as an accompaniment to itſelf in notes of augmentation or diminution, it is to them that the examination of this Chorus is recommended, who will ſee that while one part is performing the theme in crotchets and quavers, another is conſtantly repeating it in quavers and ſemiquavers: an exerciſe for ingenuity often practiſed about two hundred years ago, on a few ſlow notes, or in fragments of canto fermo; but never before, I believe, in ſo many parts, with ſuch perfect airy freedom, or little appearance of reſtraint and difficulty.

ſung

ſung with elegant ſimplicity. And "*their ſound is gone out,*" (Pſ. xix. 4.) and "*Let us break their bonds aſunder,*" (Pſ. ii. 3.) both upon two different ſubjects, are capital Choruſes in very different ſtyles, as well as meaſure, and were performed with the utmoſt ſpirit and preciſion; but I haſten to ſpeak of the Allelujah, which is the triumph of HANDEL, of the COMMEMORATION, and of the muſical art.

The opening is clear, chearful, and bold. And the words, "*For the Lord God omnipotent reigneth,*" (Rev. xix. 6.) ſet to a fragment of canto fermo, which all the parts ſing, as ſuch, in uniſons and octaves, has an effect truly eccleſiaſtical. It is afterwards made the ſubject of fugue and ground-work for the Allelujah. Then, as a ſhort epiſode in plain counter-point, we have "*The kingdom of this world*" (Ib. ix. 15.)—which being begun *piano*, was ſolemn and affecting. But the laſt and principal ſubject propoſed, and led off by the baſe—"*And he ſhall reign for ever and ever,*" is the moſt pleaſing and fertile that has ever been invented ſince the art of fugue was firſt cultivated. It is marked, and conſtantly to be diſtinguiſhed through all the parts, accompaniments, counter-ſubjects and contrivances, with which it is charged. And, finally, the words—"*King of Kings, and Lord of Lords,* (Ib. xix. 16.) always ſet to a ſingle ſound, which ſeems to ſtand at bay, while the other parts attack it in every poſſible manner, in "*Allelujahs—for ever and ever,*" is a moſt happy and marvellous concatination of harmony, melody, and great effects.

Dante, in his *Paradiſo*, imagines nine circles, or choirs of cherubs, ſeraphs, patriarchs, prophets, martyrs, ſaints, angels, and archangels, who with hand and voice are eternally praiſing and glorifying the Supreme Being, whom he places in the centre; taking the idea from *Te Deum laudamus*, where it is ſaid: "*To thee Cherubim*

rubim and Seraphim continually do cry," &c. Now as the Orcheſtra in Weſtminſter Abbey, ſeemed to aſcend into the clouds and unite with the ſaints and martyrs repreſented on the painted glaſs in the weſt window, which had all the appearance of a continuation of the Orcheſtra; I could hardly refrain, during the performance of the Allelujah, to imagine that this Orcheſtra, ſo admirably conſtructed, filled, and employed, was a point or ſegment of one of theſe celeſtial circles. And perhaps, no band of mortal muſicians ever exhibited a more reſpectable appearance to the eye, or afforded a more extatic and affecting ſound to the ear, than this.

" So ſung they, and the empyrèan rung
" With Allelujahs."

PART

PART III.

" *I Know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he will ſtand at* " *the latter day upon the earth: and though worms deſtroy* " *this body, yet in my fleſh I ſhall ſee God.* (Job xix. 25, 26.) " *For now is Chriſt riſen from the dead, the firſt fruits of them that ſleep.*" 1 Cor. xv. 20.

It has been ſaid, I think, inconſiderately, " that the Airs of " the MESSIAH are greatly inferior to moſt of thoſe in HANDEL's " Operas, and other Oratorios." It would not, however, be difficult to point out eight or ten Airs of peculiar merit in this Oratorio; among which, " *Every Valley*"—preceded by the accompanied Recitative, " *Comfort ye my people*"—*He ſhall feed his* " *flock*—*He was deſpiſed*—and *I know that my Redeemer liveth*"—are ſo excellent, that it would not be eaſy to find their equals in any one of his Operas or other Oratorios. Indeed, the univerſal rapture viſible in the countenances of this uncommonly numerous and ſplendid audience, during the whole time that madame Mara was performing the very affecting Air with which the IIId part of the MESSIAH is opened: " *I know that my Redeemer liveth*," exceeded every ſilent expreſſion of delight from Muſic which I had ever before obſerved. Her power over the ſenſibility of the audience ſeemed equal to that of Mrs. Siddons. There was no eye within my view which did not

——— " ſilently a gentle tear let fall."

Nor

Nor, though long hackneyed in Muſic, did I find myſelf made

" of ſtronger earth than others."

At the end of her performance of this Air, the audience ſeemed burſting with applauſe for which the place allowed of no decorous means of utterance. The Italians, when much pleaſed with Muſic in their churches, manifeſt rapture by coughing, ſpitting, blowing their noſes, or ſcraping their feet, which with us are expreſſions of contempt. The conſtruction, however, of theſe audible ſigns are eaſy and intelligible, when once they are ſettled by national compact.

After this juſtly admired Air, the ſhort Semi-chorus: " *Since* " *by man came death,*" in plain counterpoint, by the principal ſoprano, counter-tenor, tenor, and baſe, without inſtruments, had a ſweet and ſolemn effect, which heightened the beauty of the following Chorus: " *By man came alſo the reſurrection of the dead.*" And the Semi-chorus, " *for as in Adam all die,*" ſung in the ſame unaccompanied manner, by three of the beſt ſingers in each of the four ſpecies of voice, contraſted admirably with the full Chorus—" *Even ſo in Chriſt ſhall all be made alive.*"

The effect of contraſt in theſe movements, alternately ſung with, and without inſtruments, was ſo agreeable and ſtriking, that it were to be wiſhed more frequent uſe was made of ſuch an eaſy expedient.

The favourite Baſe ſong, " *The Trumpet ſhall ſound,*" (1 Cor. xv. 52.) was very well performed by Signor Taſca and Mr. Sarjant, who accompanied him on the trumpet admirably. There are, however, ſome paſſages in the trumpet-part to this Air, which have always a bad effect, from the natural imperfection of the inſtrument. In HANDEL's time, compoſers were not ſo delicate in writing for

Trumpets

Trumpets and French-horns, as at preſent; it being now laid down as a rule, that the fourth and ſixth of a key on both theſe inſtruments, being *naturally* ſo much out of tune that no player can make them perfect, ſhould never be uſed but in ſhort paſſing notes, to which no baſe is given that can diſcover their falſe intonation. Mr. Sarjeant's tone is extremely ſweet and clear, but every time that he was obliged to dwell upon G, the fourth of D, diſpleaſure appeared in every countenance; for which I was extremely concerned, knowing how inevitable ſuch an effect muſt be from ſuch a cauſe *(a)*.

The Chorus—"*But thanks be to God,*" (Ibid. 57.) and the Air—"*If God is for us,*" Rom. viii. 31), ſung by Miſs Cantelo, were well performed, and had very pleaſing effects.

"*Worthy is the Lamb that was ſlain, and hath redeemed us to*
"*God by his blood, to receive power, and riches, and wiſdom, and*
"*ſtrength, and honour, and glory, and bleſſing.* Rev. v. 12.

"*Bleſſing and honour, glory and power, be unto Him that ſit-*
"*teth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever!*
"*Amen.*" Ibid. 13.

Of theſe three final Choruſes it is difficult to determine which is the beſt, or had the grandeſt effect, from the very uncommon force and accuracy with which they were now performed. But though theſe three admirable movements are all in the ſame key and meaſure, yet their characters are totally different: the firſt—"*Worthy is the Lamb*—in ſolemn, ſimple counterpoint, and

(a) In the Allelujah, p. 150, of the printed ſcore, G, the fourth of the key, is ſounded and ſuſtained during two entire bars. In the Dettingen *Te Deum*, p. 30, and in many other places, this *falſe concord*, or interval, perpetually deforms the fair face of harmony, and indeed the face of almoſt every one that hears it, with an expreſſion of pain. It is very much to be wiſhed that this animating and brilliant inſtrument could have its defects removed by ſome ingenious mechanical contrivance, as thoſe of the German flute are, by keys.

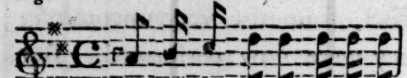
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modulation, is ſlow; with alternate ſtrains of an accelerated movement, to which there is a very ingenious and pleaſing accompaniment for the violins, totally different from the voice-parts.

" *Bleſſing and honour, glory and power (a), be unto him that* " *ſitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever.*"

This ſecond Chorus on a marked, ſpirited, and pleaſing ſubject of fugue, in the ſtyle of canto fermo, is led off by the tenors aud baſes, in uniſon; then it is repeated by the trebles an octave higher, without accompaniments, till the point:—" *that ſitteth* " *upon the throne,*" is anſwered by the tenors. After which the counter-tenors introduce the firſt ſubject, and are followed by the baſes. When all the parts have ſung the whole ſubject, which is long, particular ſections of it are made points of imitation. And after the fugue has been well treated in all the relative keys, while

(a) The ſeeming contraction of the words in the notation of this paſſage, has a barbarous appearance to the eye: as HANDEL has allowed but three notes to five ſyllables; though the time is ſo ſlow (*Larghetto*) that no eliſion in ſinging them ſeems neceſſary. *e. g.*

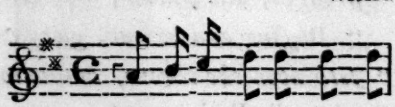


Bleſſing and honour, glory and

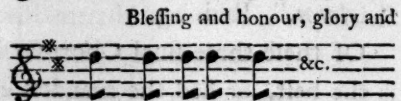


power, be un to him, &c.

The compoſer, from the little experience he had had in ſetting Engliſh words, in the year 1741, thinking the rapid manner in which the language is pronounced in converſation ſhould be followed in reading and ſinging poetry and lofty proſe, ſet the words of this Chorus thus:



Bleſſing and honour, glory and



power, be unto him.—

and this notation has been literally followed in all tranſcripts and editions of the Oratorio ever ſince.

This little defect would certainly not have been pointed out here, had it not been with the wiſh of indicating an apology for it, and a cure. In future editions and tranſcripts of ſo claſſical a production, it ſeems neceſſary to recommend the correction of this and a few other ſimilar inaccuracies, leſt mere verbal critics, laying too much ſtreſs on ſuch trivial defects, ſhould endeavour to diminiſh the glory of the author and his work

while the violins are moving in ſemi-quavers, the important words "*bleſſing, honour, glory,*"—are diſtinctly and judiciouſly pronounced by all the vocal parts together, in plain counter-point, with a crotchet reſt, or muſical comma, between each of them. Then, with a fire, ſpirit, and reſources peculiar to HANDEL, this admirable Chorus is wound up with reiterations of the words "*for ever and ever,*" in all the ſplendor of full harmony and animated movement.

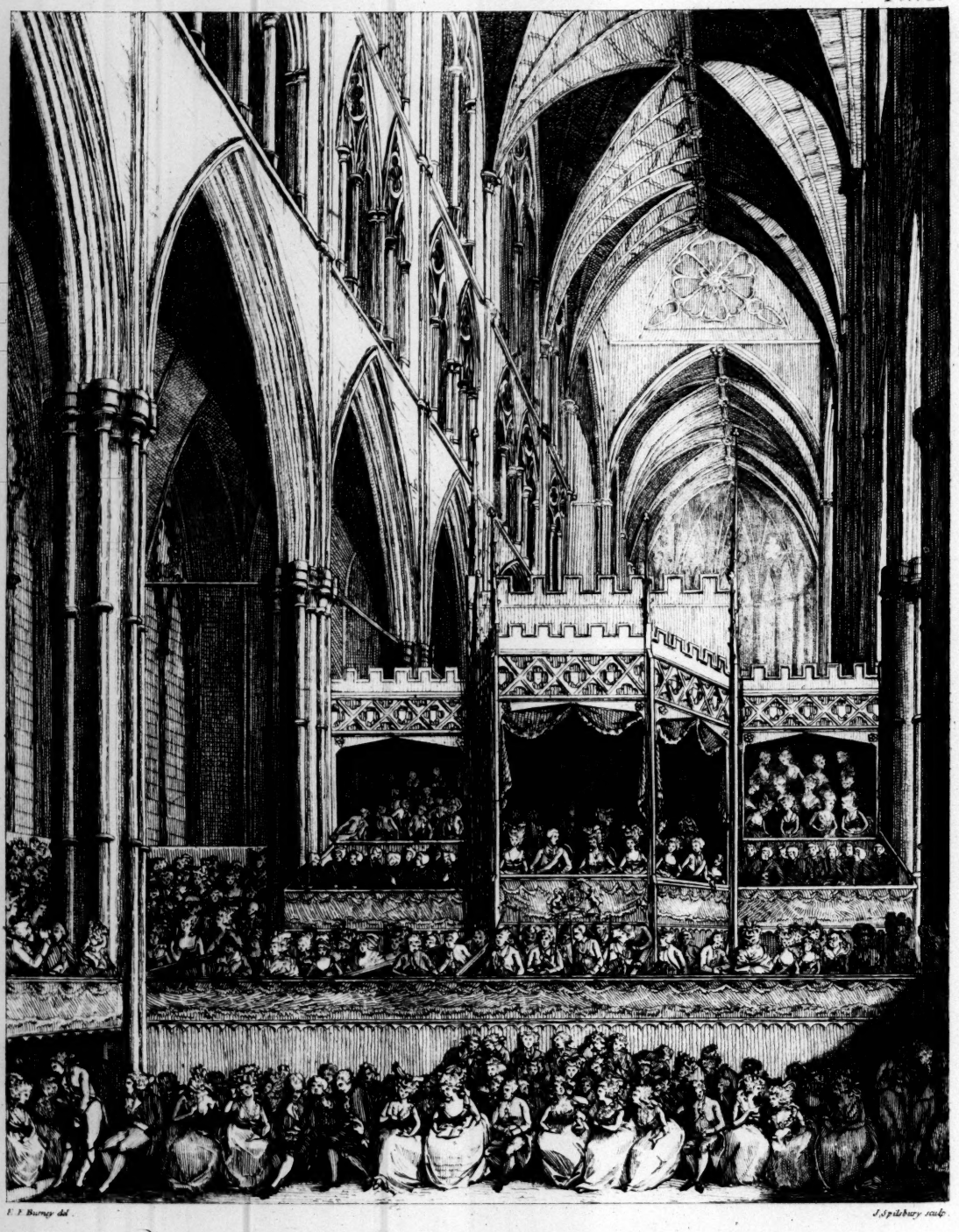
And, at length, when thoſe who hear the MESSIAH for the firſt time imagine the whole performance to be completely and glorioufly finiſhed, *a finale* is led off by the baſes, in a fugue, upon a noble ſubject, to the Hebrew concluſive term of devotion, *Amen.* In the courſe of this movement the ſubject is divided, ſubdivided, inverted, enriched with counter-ſubjects, and made ſubſervient to many ingenious and latent purpoſes of harmony, melody, and imitation; with the effects of which, though all muſt be ſtruck and delighted, yet thoſe only are able to comprehend the whole merit of contexture in this Chorus, who have ſtudied harmony or counter-point, and are capable of judging of deſign, arrangement, contrivance, and all the ingenious mazes and perplexities of elaborate compoſitions. Here HANDEL, unembarraſſed by words, gave a looſe to genius, liberated from all reſtraints but thoſe of his own art. An inſtrumental fugue could not be more free and unconfined than this, upon an open vowel, and a ſyllable that terminates with the eaſy appulſe of the tongue and teeth, which the liquid letter *n* requires. Symphonies of a ſolemn kind, without ſinging, are frequently played in the Italian

work. And, indeed, however ſlight or unimportant ſuch overſights may be to lovers of Muſic, to mere grammarians and philologers, they appear unpardonable.

churches, during the *Meſſa baſſa*, or ſilent celebration of the maſs. And diviſions on particular words and ſyllables, which are thought innovations and modern fopperies, have been proved of the higheſt antiquity in the church, and the authority of Saint Auguſtine has been cited in apology for their uſe *(a)*.

(a) " When we are unable to find words " worthy of the Divinity, we do well, ſays " this ſaint, to addreſs him with confuſed " ſounds of joy and thankſgiving. For " to whom are ſuch extatic ſounds due, un- " leſs to the Supreme Being? And how " can we celebrate his ineffable goodneſs, " when we are equally unable to adore him " in ſilence, and to find any other expreſ- " ſions of our tranſports, than inarticulate " ſounds?" *Hiſtory of Muſic*, vol. ii. p. 172.

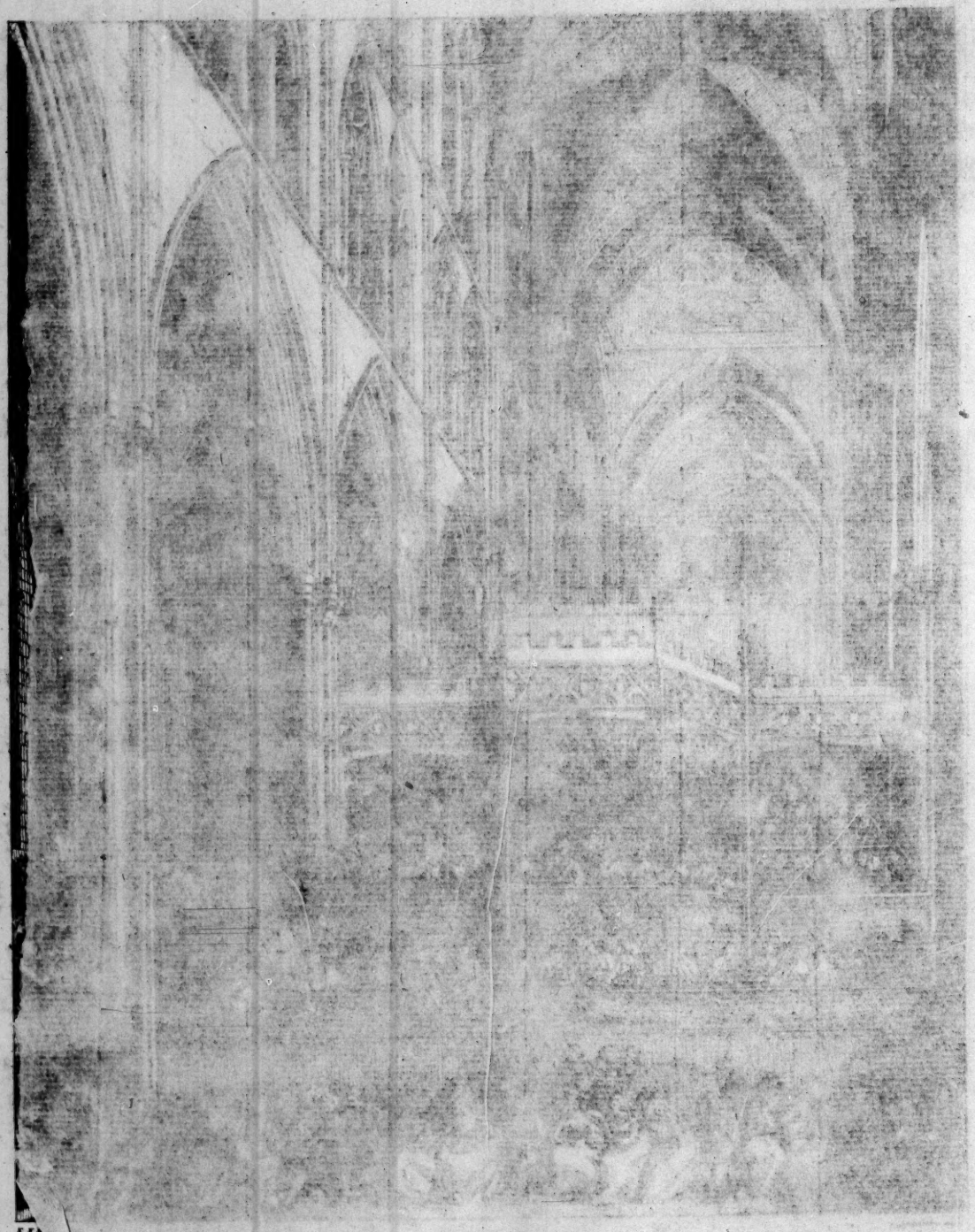
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F. P. Burney del. J. Spilsbury sculp.

View of the Gallery prepared for the reception of their Majesties, the Royal Family, Directors, & principal Personages in the Kingdom, at the **COMMEMORATION** *of* **HANDEL** *in Westminster Abbey.*





at the COMMEMORATION *of* HANDEL *in Westminster Abbey.*

COMMEMORATION

OF

HANDEL.

FOURTH PERFORMANCE,

WESTMINSTER-ABBEY.

June 3, 1784.

BY COMMAND OF HIS MAJESTY.

[To face P. 91.]

Selection of Sacred Muſic for the Fourth Commemoration Performance.

PART I.

OVERTURE—ESTHER.
The Dettingen TE DEUM.

PART II.

OVERTURE OF TAMERLANE, and Dead March in SAUL.
Part of the FUNERAL ANTHEM.
When the ear heard him.
He delivered the poor that cried.
His body is buried in peace.
GLORIA PATRI, from the JUBILATE.

PART III.

AIR AND CHORUS—*Jehovah crown'd with glory bright.* In ESTHER.
FIRST GRAND CONCERTO.
CHORUS—*Gird on thy ſword.* In SAUL.
FOURTH HAUTBOIS CONCERTO.
ANTHEM—*O ſing unto the Lord all the whole earth.*
CHORUS—*The Lord ſhall reign for ever and ever.* ISRAEL IN EGYPT.
CORONATION ANTHEM. *Zadoc the Prieſt.*

INTRODUCTION.

THE preceding performances having given ſuch entire ſatiſfaction to all that were preſent, and becoming, of courſe, the general ſubject of diſcuſſion and praiſe, excited a great deſire in all lovers of Muſic, and even of ſplendid ſpectacles, who were abſent, to be enabled to judge and ſpeak of tranſactions ſo memorable, from the conviction of their own ſenſes. But even theſe were not more eager in wiſhing there might be a repetition of the performances, than thoſe who had already attended them. Luckily for all parties, the wiſhes of their Majeſties coincided with thoſe of their ſubjects; and as the ſcaffolding was ſtill ſtanding, and the band not yet diſperſed, two more opportunities were given for the diſplay of HANDEL's wonderful powers, and the gratification of public curioſity.

On Monday, the laſt day of May, theſe two additional performances had the advantage of being announced in the public papers, with the moſt honourable and indubitable teſtimony of Royal Patronage, in the following manner.

BY

" By COMMAND of His MAJESTY.

In Commemoration of HANDEL, under the Direction of the

Earl of Exeter	Sir Watkin Williams Wynn, Bart.
Earl of Sandwich	
Earl of Uxbridge	Sir Richard Jebb, Bart.

On THURSDAY next, the 3d of June, there will be an additional performance of

SACRED MUSIC,

In Weſtminſter-Abbey,

Conſiſting of the following Pieces compoſed by that Great Maſter.

PART I.

Overture, Eſther.

The Dettingen Te Deum.

PART II.

Overture, Tamerlane—with the Dead March in Saul.

When the Ear heard him,
He delivered the Poor that cried,
His Body is buried in Peace,
} From the Funeral Anthem.

Gloria Patri, from the Jubilate.

PART III.

Firſt Grand Concerto.

Chorus.—Gird on thy Sword, from Saul.

Fourth Hautboy Concerto.

Anthem.—O ſing unto the Lord all the whole Earth.

Chorus—The Lord ſhall reign for ever and ever, from Iſrael in Egypt.

Coronation Anthem.—Zadock the Prieſt.

The doors will be opened at Nine o'Clock preciſely, and the performance will begin at Twelve, when the doors will be ſhut.

Tickets for this Performance will be delivered at One Guinea each, at the St. Alban's Tavern, in St. Alban's-ſtreet, and no where elſe, on Tueſday the 1ſt, and Wedneſday the 2d of June, between the hours of Ten in the morning, and Ten in the evening of each day, and after that time no Tickets can be delivered, or Money taken; but when the number of Tickets ſhall be judged ſufficient to fill the places allotted for the company, the delivery of them will be ſtopped before the hour of Ten on Wedneſday night.

The profits ariſing from this performance, as well as thoſe of the former ones, will be applied to charitable purpoſes."

" By COMMAND of Her MAJESTY.

On Saturday next, June 5, being the LAST DAY of the

COMMEMORATION OF HANDEL,

Will be performed in Weſtminſter-Abbey,

Under the Management of the

Earl of Exeter	Sir Watkin Williams Wynn, Bart.
Earl of Sandwich	Sir Richard Jebb, Bart.
Earl of Uxbridge	

The SACRED ORATORIO of

THE MESSIAH.

The doors will be opened at Nine o'Clock preciſely, and the performance will begin at Twelve, when the doors will be ſhut.

Tickets to be had at the St. Alban's Tavern, on Friday next, and no where elſe, from Eight in the Morning, till Ten at Night.

The profits ariſing from this performance, as well as thoſe of the former ones, will be applied to charitable purpoſes."

Experience is ſuch an admirable inſtructreſs, that every little perplexity, or unexpected embarraſſment, which had occaſioned the leaſt trouble or inconvenience to the company, in approaching or entering the Abbey, had been ſo entirely removed by the well-concerted meaſures which the Directors and their aſſiſtants had taken, that no aſſemblies equally numerous were, perhaps, ever formed before, on any occaſion, with ſuch perfect facility as theſe.

Though the pieces performed in the Abbey, on the firſt Day of Commemoration, were ſo admirably executed, and univerſally approved, yet as there were a few changes and additions to be made at the particular inſtance of his Majeſty, a public rehearſal was advertiſed for Wedneſday, at which upwards of Eight hundred perſons were preſent, who paying half guineas for admiſſion, conſiderably augmented the clear profits appropriated to charitable purpoſes.

The order in which the ſeveral pieces of this day were performed, is the following:

PART

PART I.

OVERTURE IN ESTHER. 1722.

THE DETTINGEN TE DEUM. 1743.

OF theſe excellent productions, nothing need be added to what has already been ſaid, in the account of the firſt day's performance *(a)*; except, that for accuracy of execution, and grandeur of effect, they now merited ſtill warmer praiſe.

(a) See p. 27, 28.

PART II.

OVERTURE IN TAMERLANE.

Compoſed 1724.

WITH THE DEAD MARCH IN SAUL,

1740.

When the ear heard him, &c.	Funeral Anthem.
He delivered the poor that cried, &c.	
His body is buried in peace, &c.	Compoſed 1737.
Gloria Patri - - -	*Jubilate* 1713.

THE only change that was made in the pieces of this part of to-day's performance, was playing the two firſt movements of the Overture in *Tamerlane*, inſtead of the firſt movement of the Overture in *Saul*, which was very judicious, and produced an admirable effect. The opening of the Overture in Tamerlane is remarkably majeſtic in itſelf; and the powerful manner in which all the parts were this day enforced, augmented its dignity and importance. The fugue, upon a marked, lively, and airy ſubject, is ſo cloſely and ingeniouſly worked, as to be continually heard in one or other of the parts; for even where the hautbois are left to themſelves, the ſolo paſſages allotted to them ariſe either out of the ſubject of the movement, or its inverſion. It was wonderfully compact in performance, and after being twice played with the preciſion of a few ſelect hands, and the effect of myriads; from its being in a minor key, and in an animated movement, it contributed much to brighten the grateful richneſs of the harmony, as well as to give dignity to the flow and ſolemn meaſure, of the

DEAD MARCH IN SAUL.

PART III.

AIR AND CHORUS IN ESTHER.

Compoſed in 1720 *(a)*.

AIR.

Jehovah crown'd with glory bright,
Surrounded with eternal light,
Whoſe miniſters are flames of fire,
Ariſe, and execute thine ire (b).

CHORUS.

He comes, he comes, to end our woes,
And pour his vengeance on our foes.
Earth trembles, lofty mountains nod,
Jacob ariſe, to meet thy God
He comes, &c. *(c).*

(a) Though this Oratorio was compoſed ſo early as 1720, for the duke of Chandos, at Cannons, yet it was not publickly performed till May, 1732; when it ran during ten nights.

(b) This Air is more than an imitation of the following lines in the laſt Chorus of the 2d Act of Racine's Eſther.

O Dieu, que la gloire couronne!
Dieu, que la lumiere environne!
Qui voles ſur l'aile des vent,——
Donne à ton nom la victoire.

(c) *Arme-toi, vien nous defendre.*
Deſcends tel qu'autrefois la Mer te vit deſcendre.
Que les mechans apprennent aujourd'hui
A craindre ta colere.

I never could aſcertain who was the writer of this Oratorio, in Engliſh: according to the author of the *Bibl. Brit. Tom.* xv. 1740, it was aſcribed to Pope and Arbuthnot; but, by whomſoever it was produced, there is certainly ſomething in many of the lines that ſeems entitled to the name of poetry.

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The invocation to the Divinity in the Air, as well as his annunciation in the ſubſequent Chorus, are ſet in a ſtyle ſo peculiarly grand, that they ought not to be paſſed by without ſomething more than an indiſcriminate acknowledgment of their excellence.

The opening of this ſcene in the firſt Sacred Drama that was ſet to Muſic by HANDEL, bears all the marks of a grand and ſublime genius. He was now arrived at the age of thirty-ſix, when, after writing for the firſt performers in Europe, vocal and inſtrumental, his judgment was matured ſufficiently to guide, without abating his fire and enthuſiaſm. And this Chorus ſeems entitled to admiration for a different ſpecies of merit from the generality of his Oratorio Choruſes, to which we liſten with wonder, at the knowledge, contrivance, art of fugue, or richneſs of harmony with which they abound; for this has all the ſpirit and activity of a compoſition truly *dramatic*. And the perpetual agitation of the inſtrumental parts helps the expreſſion of the words, in a moſt wonderful manner.

Indeed the accompaniments are ſo full and complete, that they ſeem to have been written before the voice-parts, which are chiefly in plain counterpoint; furniſhing ſuch ſimple fundamental harmony as the right-hand of a harpſichord-player might compreſs into chords, in accompanying the baſe. There is neither fugue nor imitation carried on in this Chorus, except for a few bars, at the words, "*to end our woes—And pour his vengeance on our* "*foes.*"—But at the ſecond ſtrain—"*Earth trembles,*" &c. there is a grandeur of expreſſion and effect, which, as it was the firſt time I had ever heard this compoſition performed, acted on my feelings in a very uncommon manner.

As ſome of my readers may, perhaps, wiſh to know a few circumſtances belonging to the hiſtory of this *primitive* Oratorio, beſides thoſe that have been related in the Life of HANDEL, p. 22; the following information has been obtained from Dr. Randal, the muſical profeſſor at Cambridge, and Mr. Barrow, who were among the original performers, when it was dramatically repreſented.

On the firſt performance of ESTHER, in action, at the houſe of Mr. Bernard Gates, Maſter of the Children of the Chapel-Royal, in 1731, the parts were caſt in the following manner:

Eſther - -	by Mr.	John (now Dr.) Randal.
Aſſuerus, and firſt Iſraelite -		James Butler.
Haman - - -		John Moore.
Mordecai, and Iſraelite Boy -		John Brown.
Prieſt of the Iſraelites - -		John Beard.
Harbonah - - - -		Price Clevely.
Perſian Officer, and 2d Iſraelite		James Allen.
Iſraelites and Officers - -		Samuel (late Dr.) Howard.
	Mr.	Thomas Barrow.
		Robert Denham.

Soon after this, it was twice performed by the ſame children, at the Crown and Anchor, by the deſire of William Huggins, eſq. a member of that Society, and tranſlator of Arioſto, publiſhed 1757, who furniſhed the dreſſes. Mr. HANDEL himſelf was preſent at one of theſe repreſentations, and having mentioned it to the Princeſs Royal, his illuſtrious ſcholar, her Royal Highneſs was pleaſed to expreſs a deſire to ſee it exhibited in action at the Opera-houſe in the Hay-market, by the ſame young performers; but Dr. Gibſon, then biſhop of London, would not grant permiſſion for its being repreſented on that ſtage, even with books

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in the children's hands. Mr. HANDEL, however, the next year, had it performed at that theatre, with additions to the Drama, by Humphreys; but in *ſtill life:* that is, without action, in the ſame manner as Oratorios have been ſince conſtantly performed. The Drama exhibited by the children conſiſted only of two acts: beginning with the Recitative, "*Tis greater far,*" &c. as it had been originally ſet for the duke of Chandos.

The firſt Oratorios that were performed in Italy, at the beginning of the laſt century, were *ſacred Dramas*, or *Repreſentations*, performed in action; and *Eſther* and *Athalie* were exhibited in France, at the convent of St. Cyr, in that manner. It ſeems to have been a cuſtom of very ancient ſtanding, for our court to employ the children of the chapel in dramatic repreſentations, under the direction of the maſter of the revels. And in the houſhold book of the earls of Northumberland, it appears that the ſame uſe was originally made of the ſinging-boys of their domeſtic chapel. It appears likewiſe that moſt of Ben Jonſon's Maſques, written for queen Elizabeth and king James the Firſt, were acted and ſung by the children of the Chapel-Royal; and among his Epigrams, we find an epitaph on S. P. a child of queen Elizabeth's chapel, whoſe talents for acting are more celebrated than thoſe for ſinging *(a)*.

(a) "Weep with me all you that read
This little ſtory:
And know for whom a tear you ſhed,
Death's ſelf is ſorry.
'Twas a child that ſo did thrive
In grace and feature,
As heav'n and nature ſeem'd to ſtrive
Which own'd the creature.
Yeares he number'd ſcarce thirteen
When *Fates* turn'd cruel,
Yet three fill'd zodiackes had he been
The ſtages jewel;
And did act, what now we moane
Old men ſo duely,
As ſooth the *Parcæ* thought him one,
He play'd ſo truely.
So by error to his fate
They all conſented;
But viewing him ſince, alas too late,
They have repented;
And have ſought to give new birth,
In bathes to ſteep him;
But, being ſo much too good for earth,
Heav'n vows to keep him."
Ben Jonſon's Works, Fol. Edit. p. 38.

FIRST

FIRST GRAND CONCERTO.

If the epithet *grand*, inſtead of implying, as it uſually does, many parts, or a Concerto requiring a great band or Orcheſtra, had been here intended to expreſs ſublimity and dignity, it might have been uſed with the utmoſt propriety; for I can recollect no movement that is more lofty and noble than this; or in which the treble and baſe of the *tutti*, or full parts, are of two ſuch diſtinct and marked characters; both bold, and contraſted, not only with each other, but with the ſolo parts, which are graceful and *chantant*. Nor did I ever know ſo much buſineſs done in ſo ſhort a time; that movement contains but thirty-four bars, and yet nothing ſeems left unſaid; and though it begins with ſo much pride and haughtineſs, it melts, at laſt, into ſoftneſs; and, where it modulates into a minor key, ſeems to expreſs fatigue, languor, and fainting.

The ſubject of the next movement is gay and pleaſing. And, when the firſt violin has a ſeries of iterated notes, in ſcale, by thirds with the baſe, the ſecond violin renders them intereſting by the poignancy of ſharp fifths, mounting up to ſixths, uſed as *appoggiaturas*, or notes of taſte. In the *adagio*, while the two trebles are ſinging in the ſtyle of vocal duets of the time, where theſe parts, though not in regular fugue, abound in *imitations* of the fugue kind; the baſe, with a boldneſs and character peculiar to HANDEL, ſupports with learning and ingenuity the ſubject of the two firſt bars, either direct or inverted, throughout the movement, in a clear, diſtinct, and marked manner. The fugue upon an airy pleaſing theme, is cloſely worked and carried on from the beginning to the end without epiſode, or diviſion

ſion foreign to the ſubject, and in a modulation ſtrictly confined to the key note and its fifth: thoſe who know the merit and difficulty of this ſpecies of compoſition can alone be ſenſible of our author's reſources and ſuperiority, whenever fugue is in queſtion. The laſt *Allegro*, in the time of a quick Minuet, contains many graceful and pleaſing paſſages, particularly in the ſolo parts. I have often heard this Concerto well performed at Vaux-hall, Ranelagh, and other places, ſoon after its publication, by what were, then, thought *great bands*; but the force, dignity, and importance given to every paſſage and combination by this unparalleled band, renovated and ſurpaſſed all the pleaſure it ever afforded me before.

CHORUS IN SAUL.

Compoſed 1740.

Gird on thy ſword, thou man of might,
Purſue thy wonted fame;
Go on, be proſperous in fight,
Retrieve the Hebrew name.

Thy ſtrong right hand with terror arm'd,
Shall thy obdurate foes diſmay;
While others, by thy virtue charm'd,
Shall crowd to own thy righteous ſway.

This Chorus is extremely animating and ſpirited; and, as the words imply, being intended to rouſe and ſtimulate a hero to take the field, ſeemed, in the performance by ſo numerous a band, to expreſs the clamorous entreaties of a whole people. The point "*retrieve the Hebrew name*," led off in the middle of this Chorus,

Chorus, contraſted admirably with the artful and intentional confuſion of the beginning; and the artleſs ſimplicity of the laſt movement,—" *while others by thy virtue charmed,*" led off in a kind of *canto fermo*, by upwards of ſixty tenor voices, in uniſon, had an effect to which our ears are wholly unaccuſtomed. Indeed, the powerful manner in which this ſubject was delivered, ſingly, by the other parts, as well as the ingenuity of the accompaniment, and united force of the whole band, augmented throughout by the *tromboni*, when every voice and every inſtrument was employed, muſt have aſtoniſhed, by the novelty of the effects, not only the unlearned lovers of Muſic, but the moſt ſcientific and experienced Muſicians preſent.

FOURTH HAUTBOIS CONCERTO *(a)*.

I received ſuch pleaſure in my youth from all the ſix admirable Concertos, of which this is one, that as I had not heard them performed for many years, I rejoiced much to ſee two of them in the liſt of Commemoration-pieces; and ſtill more, on hearing them, to find that they had not loſt ground in my affection. To aſſert that they were never ſo well performed before, even under the author's own direction, is ſaying but little; as he was never maſter of ſo numerous or well diſciplined a band. Indeed, ſuch is the power of good performance, that it will give meaning and intereſt to ordinary Muſic; but compoſitions ſo intrinſically

(a) During the Opera regency of the Royal Academy, the Directors, at the cloſe of a ſeaſon, finding their finances in a better ſtate than uſual, determined to ſacrifice a night to the emolument of the *Orcheſtra*. And a Concert being thought moſt likely to turn out profitable, Dr. Arbuthnot undertook to manage, and HANDEL to compoſe an Overture on the occaſion. It was then that he produced this fourth Concerto, which from the uſe to which it was applied, was called the *Orcheſtra Overture*.

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good as theſe, ſo rich in harmony, melody, and contrivance, muſt be ſtill more heightened and ſublimed. The opening of this fourth Hautbois Concerto is full, bold, and ſpirited, in the Overture ſtyle; the ſecond movement is conſtructed upon one of the moſt airy themes, that ever was made the ſubject of fugue; and it is ſtill chequered, and enlivened by Miſcellaneous paſſages. The third movement is a very agreeable Air, in minuet time, *alla caccia*. Indeed, this movement is ſo much in the French-horn ſtyle, that it ſeems to call for that inſtrument. The fourth movement is a ſhort fugue, in a minor key, with ſolo parts for the two violins. The *finale* is a very pleaſing minuet, with a ſolo part for a baſſoon. The late celebrated performer on that inſtrument, Miller, uſed to acquire great applauſe by his tone, and manner of playing this movement, at public places. It was now performed by twenty-four baſſoons, of which the unity of effect was truly marvellous. The violoncellos were very judiciouſly ordered to play only the under part in this ſtrain.

And here it ſeems but indiſpenſable juſtice to obſerve, that Mr. Fiſcher performed the ſolo parts of this Concerto, upon the Hautbois, with ſuch exquiſite taſte and propriety, as muſt have convinced all thoſe who heard him, that his excellence is not confined to the performance of his own very original and ingenious productions. Indeed, one of the Commemoration-wonders ſeems to have been, the perfect manner with which the ſweet and grateful tone of his ſingle inſtrument filled the ſtupendous building, where this excellent Concerto was performed.

I have dwelt the longer on this Concerto as it is one of the moſt maſterly and pleaſing of HANDEL'S inſtrumental productions. It was the faſhion, during his life-time, to regard his compoſitions for violins, as much inferior to thoſe of Corelli and

Geminiani; but I think very unjuſtly. If thoſe two great maſters knew the finger-board and genius of their own inſtrument better than HANDEL, it muſt be allowed, *per contra*, that he had infinitely more fire and invention than either of them. Corelli was naturally graceful, ſymmetrical, and poliſhed, but timid; Geminiani more bold, inventive, and rhapſodical, was frequently deficient in rhythm, and air. Indeed, his Muſic is ſo little phraſed, that whenever a young performer, who plays a ſubordinate part, is out, he can never get in again; whereas the melody of Corelli is ſo meaſured, that the number of bars, like feet in poetry, are even and correſpondent; ſo that an inexpert player, with a tolerable ear, if thrown out, can have little difficulty in rallying.

Theſe three admirable authors, who have ſo long delighted Engliſh ears, have certainly a diſtinct character and ſtyle of compoſition, wholly diſſimilar from each other: they would all, doubtleſs, have been greatly ſublimed by the performance of ſuch a band as that lately aſſembled; but HANDEL in a ſuperior degree: as the bold deſigns, maſſes of harmony, contraſt, and conſtant reſources of invention, with which his works abound, require a more powerful agency to develope and diſplay them, than the mild ſtrains of Corelli, or the wilder effuſions of Geminiani.

HANDEL ſports with a band, and turns it to innumerable unexpected accounts, of which neither Corelli nor Geminiani had ever the leaſt want or conception. He certainly acquired, by writing ſo long for voices and an opera band, more experience and knowledge of effects than either of theſe admirable violiniſts: ſo that ſuppoſing their genius to be equal, theſe circumſtances muſt turn the ſcale in his favour. Indeed, HANDEL was always aſpiring at *numbers* in his ſcores and in his Orcheſtra; and nothing can expreſs his grand conceptions, but

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an omnipotent band: the generality of his productions in the hands of a few performers, is like the club of Alcides, or the bow of Ulyſſes, in the hands of a dwarf.

ANTHEM.

"*O ſing unto the Lord, a new ſong,*" &c.

CHORUS.

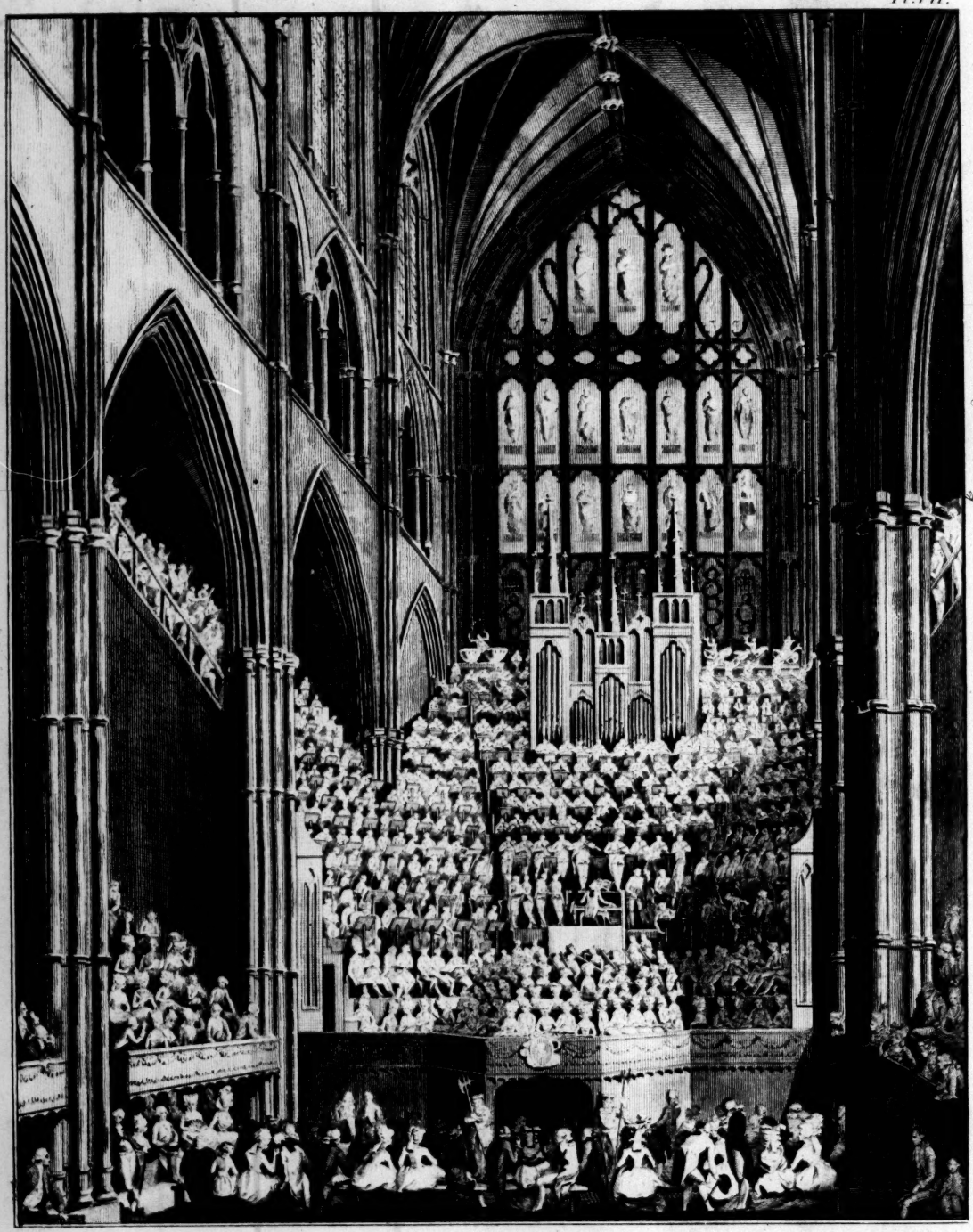
"*The Lord ſhall reign for ever and ever,*" &c.

After the Anthem and Chorus, which were performed with the ſame preciſion, and heard with the ſame unremitting eagerneſs of attention, as before, at the firſt performance in the Abbey, the

CORONATION ANTHEM;

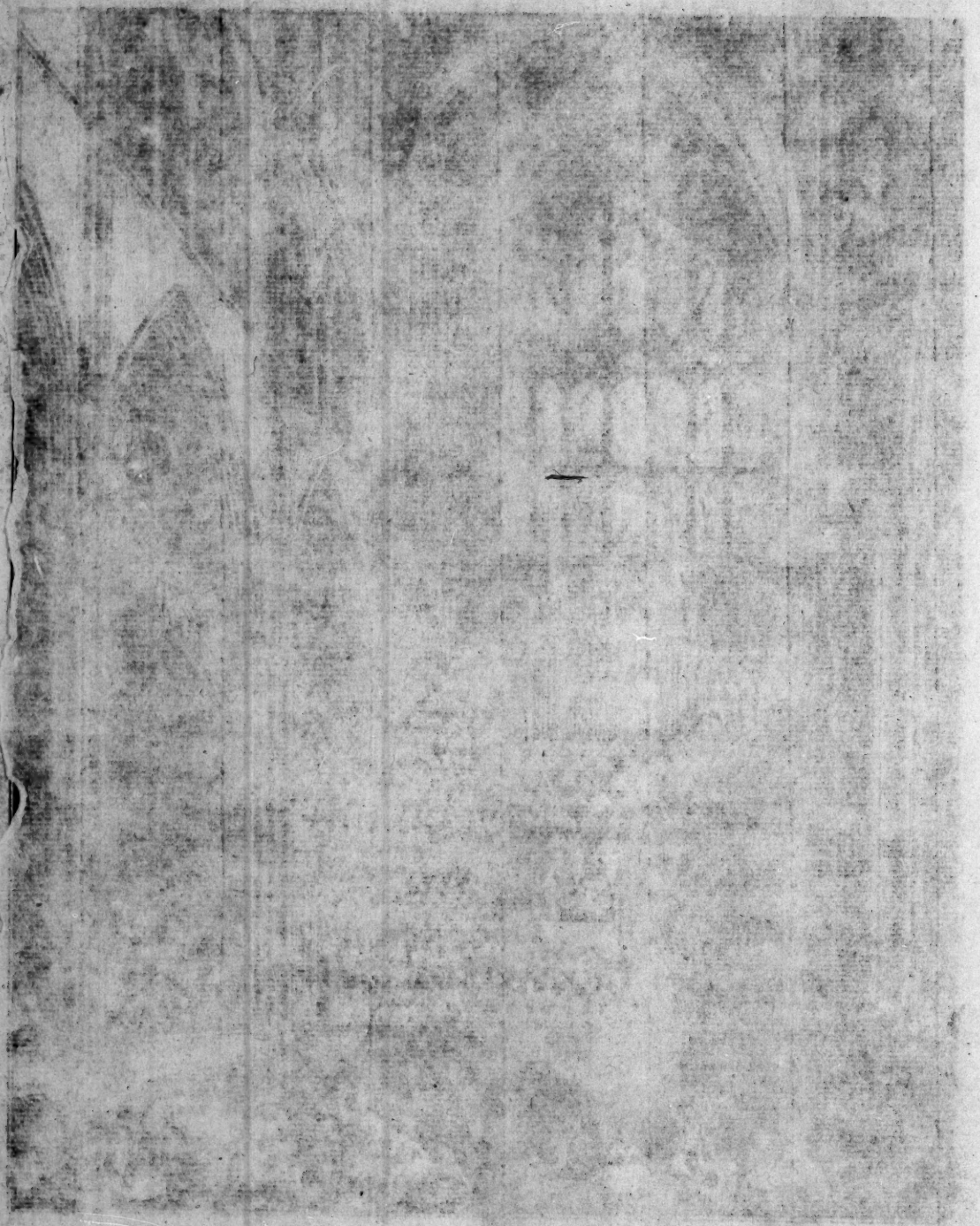
"*Zadock the prieſt, and Nathan the prophet,*" &c.

Terminated the exquiſite performance of this day; which though augmented by the addition of two Concertos, and two Choruſes, was ſo far from appearing long, that there ſeemed not to be a ſingle hearer, who did not regret its concluſion. And it would be ungrateful not to confeſs, that all the additional pieces of this day's miſcellany were ſo judiciouſly choſen and admirably executed, as to reflect the higheſt honour upon the great Muſician, who not only gave occaſion to the Feſtival, but furniſhed food for the Feaſt.



View of the ORCHESTRA and Performers in Westminster Abbey, during the Commemoration of HANDEL.

Published January 1st 1785



COMMEMORATION

OF

HANDEL.

FIFTH PERFORMANCE;

THE

MESSIAH.

By COMMAND of her MAJESTY,

In WESTMINSTER-ABBEY,

SATURDAY, June 5, 1784.

THOUGH this ſublime production was performed here but a week before, in ſo perfect and magnificent a manner, that no rehearſal, previous to its repetition, was neceſſary to the band; yet, to gratify the wiſhes of many timid and infirm lovers of Muſic, who dreaded the croud that was likely to be aſſembled at a public performance, as well as to raiſe money for charitable purpoſes, another rehearſal would certainly have been announced for Friday, if it had not been prevented from taking place by the celebration of his Majeſty's birth-day, on which occaſion there was a certainty that the chief part of the performers and company would be engaged.

Thoſe who attended this day's Commemoration at the Abbey were, ſeemingly, of a higher claſs than had yet appeared there; ſo that though the croud was ſomewhat leſs than at the preceding performance of the ſame Oratorio, the exhibition was more ſplendid. Indeed, as a ſpectacle, it was ſo magnificent to the ſight, and, as a muſical performance, ſo mellifluous and grateful to the ear, that it will be difficult for the *mind's eye* of thoſe who were abſent, to form an adequate idea of the ſhow, or the *mental ear* of the ſound, from deſcription. Every one preſent muſt have found full employment for the two ſenſes which afford us the moſt refined pleaſure; as it is from the eye and the ear that intellect is fed, and the mind furniſhed with its beſt intelligence.

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There was a change in the manner of executing the Muſic to "*Lift up your heads, O ye gates,*" which deſerves to be mentioned. On the former occaſion, the alternate ſemi-choruſes were performed by *all* the voices belonging to each part; but to-day, in order to heighten the contraſt, only by three of the principal ſingers, till about the thirty-third bar; when the whole Chorus from each ſide of the Orcheſtra, joined by all the inſtruments, burſt out, "*He is the king of glory.*" This had a moſt admirable effect, and brought tears into the eyes of ſeveral of the performers. Indeed, if we may judge from the plenitude of ſatisfaction which appeared in the countenances of all preſent, this effect was not ſuperficial, nor confined to the Orcheſtra.

Another new and grand effect was produced to-day in the Hallelujah, and laſt Chorus, "*Worthy is the Lamb,*" by the introduction of the *tromboni*, which were not uſed in theſe Choruſes, on the former occaſion.

At the firſt performance of the Meſſiah, his Majeſty expreſſed a deſire to the earl of Sandwich of hearing the moſt truly ſublime of all Choruſſes: "*Allelujah! for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth,*" a ſecond time; and this gracious wiſh was conveyed to the Orcheſtra, by the waving of his lordſhip's wand. At this ſecond performance of that matchleſs Oratorio, his Majeſty was pleaſed to make the ſignal himſelf, with a gentle motion of his right hand in which was the printed book of the words, not only for the repetition of this, but of the final Chorus, in the laſt part, to the great gratification of all his happy ſubjects preſent; and, perhaps, the ſubjects of no ſovereign prince on the globe were ever before ſo delighted with the effects of a royal mandate.

Thus ended the fifth and laſt of the performances for this memorable celebration; and ſo great and perfect was the pleaſure which

which the audience had received, that thoſe who had attended all the five exhibitions, ſeemed moſt to regret this final cloſe. There remains, however, a hope, that a performance, ſomewhat ſimilar, may be annually eſtabliſhed under the auſpices of their Majeſties and the ſame Directors, for the Benefit of the MUSICAL FUND. The plan is not yet wholly digeſted; but I have authority to ſay that their Majeſties have graciouſly condeſcended to take this Society and Charity under their Royal patronage and protection; that the noblemen and baronets who ſo admirably directed the late Commemoration, have deigned to become in a particular manner patrons of the inſtitution, by accepting the offices of honorary Preſident and Vice-Preſidents of this Society; and that an annual performance, on a grand and extenſive ſcale, is in meditation, at which pieces ſelected from the works of the immortal HANDEL, now conſecrated by time, reaſon, ſcience, and univerſal approbation, will be performed in the moſt perfect and ſplendid manner poſſible.

This information may, perhaps, a little abate the deſpair of thoſe lovers of Muſic, who imagined that ſuch an artificial want was created, by the late grand and exquiſite performances, as it was impoſſible ever again to gratify: regarding the concurrence of favourable circumſtances which produced ſuch an audience, and ſuch a performance, as totally out of the reach of purchaſe or power of chance.

Indeed the late performances, for ſome time, ſo diminiſhed the effect of Orcheſtras which always uſed to be thought the moſt conſiderable, that many of the performers in the Opera-band, after having been at the Abbey on the two Saturday mornings of Commemoration, imagined, at night, that half their brethren were abſent, and the other half, aſleep.

And though there may, perhaps, be a difference of opinion concerning the comparative excellence of particular movements in the compoſitions of each day, as well as the performance of individuals; yet the effects and perfection of the whole; the preciſion with which this muſical phalanx moved, and weight and dignity it gave to every ſeries of ſounds in melody, and combination in harmony, can only be controverted by extreme ignorance, or perfect inſenſibility. But if, beſides theſe, there ſhould ſtill be others, who, wiſhing to be thought more delicate in their feelings, and accurate in their deciſions than the reſt of mankind, are unwilling to do juſtice to theſe performances; they may ſurely be aſked what *is* good muſic, and good performance, if ſuch as produced theſe effects be denied that title? Let us, at leaſt, have ſome ſuperior ſtandard of excellence erected, under which to enliſt, before we abandon ſenſibility to the mercileſs ſeverity of unprincipled critics, who ſeem at war, not only with candour, truth, and good taſte, but with their own pleaſures.

Being very deſirous to know what judicious foreigners thought of theſe exhibitions, particularly Italians, accuſtomed to good Muſic in their churches, as well as theatres, I applied to *Count Benincaſa*, a Venetian nobleman, who was then in London, and had been preſent at the performance of the MESSIAH in Weſtminſter-Abbey, for information concerning the comparative grandeur and excellence of this Band, with any other which he had heard, or of which hiſtory or tradition had preſerved the memory, in his own country. As we had not time for a full diſcuſſion of the ſubject, when it was firſt propoſed, *viva voce*, *Signor Benincaſa* was ſo obliging as to honour me with his opinion in a letter, of which, before his departure, I entreated his permiſſion to lay an extract before the public; and it will be the more

more flattering to the projectors and executors of this ſtupendous plan, as the Count is an excellent judge of Muſic; having heard, read, meditated, and written on the ſubject, with a degree of feeling and intelligence, that is equally honourable to himſelf and the art *(a)*.

London, June 7, 1784.

Dear Sir,

THE Commemoration of HANDEL, celebrated in London during the months of May and June 1784, is one of thoſe events which every friend of humanity ſhould reverence and exalt, for the honour of mankind. Happily for you, Sir, the friend of humanity in this ſenſe, ought in a particular manner to be a friend to the Engliſh. It is only your great and very reſpectable nation that is capable of planning and executing ſuch enterprizes as carry us back to heroic times, by their grandeur and ſublimity.

De Londres ce 7 Juin, 1784.

Monſieur, et très-cher Ami,

LA Commémoration de HANDEL *célébrée à Londres aux mois de Mai et Juin* 1784, *eſt un de ces événemens que tout ami des hommes doit remarquer, et exalter pour l'honneur de ſes ſemblables. Heureuſement pour vous, Monſieur, l'ami des hommes me paroit dans ce ſens devoir être ſurtout l'ami des Anglois. C'eſt à vôtre grand et toute reſpectable nation, qu'il appartient d'imaginer, et d'exécuter les idées, qui peuvent nous retracer les tems héroiques par leur élévation, et par le ſentiment exquis, et ſublime à la fois, qu'elles déployent.*

(a) See *Eſſai ſur la Muſique*, tom. iii. Par. 1780, 4to. where there are many articles concerning Italian compoſers and ſingers, with which *Count Benincaſa* furniſhed the editor, that breathe the true ſpirit of taſte, ſenſibility, and enthuſiaſm.

In the character of a true Italian, tormented by his ſenſibility, unleſs he gives it vent aloud, I neither can be ſilent, nor ſufficiently explain to you, how much I reſpected the idea, and was ſtruck with the majeſty of its execution.

To honour in this manner the memory of an author, who has ſignalized himſelf ſo much in the divine art of Muſic, though a foreigner; an author who had the merit of breaking up new ground, and ſowing it with the immortal ſeeds of knowledge and genius, which time, however, and the limits aſſigned by nature to our exiſtence have not allowed him to ſee grow up to their preſent degree of perfection, is an event the moſt honourable to that nation which renders ſuch public and diſintereſted juſtice to the ſimple and ſilent merit of an illuſtrious mortal, who is now no more. Why, alas! did not his ſhade hover round his portrait, and enjoy the triumph *(a)*?

En qualité de bon Italien que ſa ſenſibilité tourmente, s'il ne la ſoulage pas en criant autour de lui, je ne puis ni me taire, ni vous dire aſſez, combien j'ai été touché de cet idée, et frappé de l'enſemble majeſtueux de ſon exécution.

Honorer de cette maniere la mémoire d'un auteur des plus ſignalés dans le bel art divin de la Muſique, mais qui étoit etranger; d'un auteur, qui a eu le mérite de défricher un champ preſqu' inculte dans ce ſol, en y ſémant des germes immortels de ſavoir, et de génie, mais à qui le tems, et les bornes aſſignés par la nature à tout inventeur, quelqu' étonnant qu'il fut, n'ont pas permis de porter ſon ouvrage à la perfection qu'on a plus aiſément atteinte depuis; c'eſt un des faſtes les plus honorables pour la nation, qui rend une juſtice ſi éclatante, ſi deſintéreſſée au mérite ſimple et muet d'un mort illuſtre. Pourquoi ſon ombre, en voltigeant autour de ſon portrait, n'a-t-elle pû jouir de ce beau triomphe?

(a) The portrait of HANDEL was placed in the front of the Orcheſtra.

I ſhall

I ſhall long have before my eyes that beautiful temple whoſe pointed vaults aſcend to heaven; that immenſe croud of the moſt beautiful and wealthy inhabitants of the firſt city in the univerſe; the intereſting ſpectacle of a Royal Family, whoſe beauty charms, and whoſe goodneſs captivates every eye and heart; and that prodigious Orcheſtra, which never before had exiſtence on the earth, and which by its admirable arrangement ſeemed like Muſic itſelf, to deſcend from the ſkies.

I have in vain tortured my memory to find any feſtival ſimilar to this, either in hiſtory or fable. Perhaps, a noiſy croud of trumpets, bells, harps, and drums, ſtunned the inhabitants of Babylon, when the good king Nabuchodonoſor viſited them in all his Aſiatic pomp; perhaps, the wiſe king Solomon, in his great abundance of every thing, made the vaults of the temple ring with his innumerable copper veſſels, ruſtic pipes, and brazen triangles.

J'aurai longtems devant mes yeux ce temple, qui pouſſe au ciel ſes voutes aigües, cette foule nombreuſe, l'elite des beaux et riches habitans de la premiere ville de l'univers, l'aſpect toujours intéreſſant d'une Famille Royale, dont la beauté arrête tous les yeux, et la bonté captive tous les cœurs, cet Orcheſtre immenſe, qui n'a jamais exiſté auparavant ſur la terre, et qui paroiſſoit dans ſon arrangement ſi bien entendu deſcendre des cieux, comme la Muſique qui en eſt la fille.

J'ai beau tourmenter ma memoire: elle ne me rappelle rien de ſemblable dans tous les faſtes de l'hiſtoire, et de la fable. Peut-être une foule bruyante de trompettes, de tymbales, de guitarres étourdiſſoit les places de Babylone, lorſque la bonne bête du roi Nabuchodonoſor les traverſoit dans ſa pompe Aſiatique: peut-être le grand roi Salomon, qui avoit tout par milliers, faiſoit-il rétentir les voutes du temple par le grand nombre de ſes plats de cuivre, de ſes fifres ſauvages et de ſes triangles d'airain.

But

But certainly, ſince the inexhauſtible riches and variety of harmony were firſt diſplayed, I believe that it has not been poſſible, till now, to aſſemble upwards of five hundred Muſicians, and which is ſtill more extraordinary, without impeding by their number, the moſt accurate and finiſhed execution.

No one, Sir, is better acquainted with the Muſical Feſtivals of Italy than yourſelf. But thoſe of the greateſt magnitude at the courts of Florence, Ferrara, Parma, or Naples, during the two laſt centuries, offer nothing equal in number, to the ſpectacle in Weſtminſter-Abbey.

You have been pleaſed to aſk me whether the city of Venice, which has been celebrated at all times for the ſplendor of its public repreſentations, has lately had any Muſical exhibition approaching in magnificence to the Commemoration of HANDEL.

Mais ſurement depuis que l'harmonie a déployé ſes richeſſes, ſes variétés inépuiſables, je crois qu'on n'a jamais ni pû, ni ſû raſſembler cinq cent ving cinq Muſiciens, dont le nombre étonnant n'a pas nui à l'éxecution la plus juſte, la plus finie.

Perſonne ne connoit, comme vous, Monſieur, les faſtes de la Muſique Italienne: les grandes fêtes des cours de Florence, de Ferrare, de Parme aux deux derniers ſiecles, lors de la renaiſſance de la Muſique, celles de Naples aux occaſions des événemens de cour, ne vous ont préſenté, quant au nombre, rien de comparable au ſpectacle de Weſtminſter-Abbey.

Vous avez la bonté de me demander, ſi la ville de Véniſe, qui eſt en poſſeſſion depuis tant de ſiecle de donner des ſpectacles auſſi ſinguliers, qu'elle, et dont le département muſical eſt des plus conſidérables en Italie, n'a pas peut-être fourni dernierément quelqu'exemple d'une magnificence, qui approche de la Commémoration de HANDEL.

And

And I freely own to you that we can boaſt of nothing equally numerous. Indeed, I am perſuaded, that it requires near a million of inhabitants, and as great a paſſion for Muſic as there is at preſent in London, to furniſh upwards of five hundred profeſſional Muſicians. Conſequently, whatever genius the Italians may poſſeſs for Muſic, as we have no city ſo peopled, we can never aſſemble ſuch a number of muſical profeſſors, without collecting them from many ſtates and capitals *(a)*.

The memory of the following events, however, is honourably preſerved by the Venetians. During the reſidence of their moſt ſerene highneſſes the Comte and Comteſſe du Nord, in Venice, 1782, the republic regaled them with ſeveral

Je vous réponds d'abord trés-décidement, que non, quant au nombre des Muſiciens. Je ſuis perſuadé qu'il ne faut rien moins que preſqu'un million d'habitans, et autant de luxe dans la Muſique qu'il y en a à Londres, pour mettre enſemble plus de cinq cent bons Muſiciens par état. Conſéquemment, quel que ſoit le talent des Italiens pour la Muſique, comme il eſt très-vrai, et très-naturel, qu'on la ſait en Italie mieux qu'ailleurs, cependant comme nous n'avons pas a beaucoup prés aucune ville de cette force ; il ne pourra jamais y avoir un aſſemblage pareil de profeſſeurs en Muſique, à moins qu'on ne les ramaſſe de pluſieurs villes.

Voici, pourtant, quelques événemens Vénitiens, dont on peut conſerver un ſouvenir honorable.

A l'occaſion du ſejour que LL. AA. SS. le Comte et la Comteſſe du Nord firent à Véniſe en 1782, *la Republique leur donna des*

(a) Though upwards of five hundred Muſicians were employed in the performance of the *Meſſiah*, at the Commemoration of HANDEL, yet ſuch is the preſent muſical ſtrength of this country, that it could have furniſhed an equal number for the other end of the Abbey, had they been wanted, with Giardini, Barthelemon, Salomón, &c. at their head.

ſuperb

ſuperb ſpectacles, of which a very exact and intereſting deſcription, interſperſed with national anecdotes, has been publiſhed by an Engliſh lady, ſettled at Venice. Among other feſtivals they were preſented with a *Cantata*, compoſed by Mortellari, a Neapolitan, and executed by a hundred Muſicians, male and female. A Concert and a Ball were likewiſe made for the ſame illuſtrious ſtrangers, at the theatre of Saint Benedict. The band of Muſicians all dreſſed in a rich uniform, exceeded a hundred, and had a very good effect.

But the moſt ſingular event, was the entertainment given to the preſent Emperor on his firſt arrival in Italy; a feſtival as extraordinary of its kind as that of London. All the girls in the four Conſervatorios, or Muſic-Schools, able to perform vocally or inſtrumentally, were collected. Signor Bertoni, maeſtro di Capella of one of theſe Conſervatorios, compoſed a *Cantata* ex-

fêtes ſuperbes, dont il y a une deſcription fort exacte, et très-intéreſſante d'ailleurs par pluſieurs détails nationaux, qui eſt l'ouvrage d'une dame Angloiſe établie à Véniſe. Parmi ces fêtes on leur donna une Cantate compoſée par le ſieur Mortellari, Napolitain, maître de Muſique dans cette ville, et exécutée par une centaine de Muſiciens, et Muſiciennes. Une autre ſoirée fut employée à leur donner dans le grand théatre de St. Benoît, un Concert, et un Bal. La bande des Muſiciens, tous habillés en uniforme riche, paſſoit la centaine, et la fête eut un très-bel effet.

Mais l'événement le plus ſingulier, car je le crois tout auſſi unique dans ſes circonſtances, que celui de Londres pour le nombre, eſt la fête que l'on donna à S. M. L'Empereur à ſon premier voyage en Italie.

On tira des quatre Conſervatoires, ou hôpitaux fameux, toutes les filles en état de rendre quelque partie vocale, ou inſtrumentale. Le Sieur Bertoni, maître Venitien très-connu, compoſa à cette oc-

preſſly

preſſly on the occaſion; and in the immenſe hall of the *Rezzonico* palace a band was collected, conſiſting of one hundred and twenty girls, uniformly, modeſtly, and elegantly dreſſed. Every kind of inſtrument, and every ſpecies of voice, including double-baſes, wind-inſtruments, vocal *tenors*, and *baſes*, were ſupplied by young female hands, and female throats. And there was no other man among them than the compoſer, who was a ſilent and inactive auditor. It is true, that the number of theſe fell very ſhort of five hundred; but will not the ſingularity and the difficulty of forming ſuch an aſſembly of Sirens augment their value and importance? Twenty pieces of gold may be of infinitely more value than a hundred of ſilver; and, in the preſent caſe, there is, perhaps, the metallic difference which renders the two ſums equal. And you will not, I hope, Sir, deny that one hundred girls may be a match for five hundred men, in Muſic. And

caſion une cantate exprés, et l'on vit dans la ſalle immenſe du palais Rezzonico *un Orcheſtra de cent vingt filles en uniforme modeſte et gentil: toute ſorte d'inſtrumens, tout rôle de chant, y compris la contre-baſſe, et les inſtrumens à vent, les* tenori, *et les* baſſes-tailles *pour le chant, tout etoit deſſervi par des jeunes mains, et des jeunes goziers de filles: et il n'y avoit d'autre homme au milieu d'elles, que le maître compoſiteur, qui ne faiſoit qu'aſſiſter.—Il eſt vrai qu'il y a encore bien loin de ce nombre à cinq cent; mais auſſi combien la proportion, qui réſulte de la ſingularité, et de la difficulté d'unir tant de jeunes perſonnes du ſex n'augmente t-il pas la valeur de ce nombre? Vingt pieces d'or peuvent en valoir plus de cent en argent: et dans nôtre cas il y a une difference de métal, pour ainſi dire, qui rend peut-être les deux ſommes égales. Entre nous, avouez d'ailleurs, Monſieur, que cent filles peuvent bien tenir tête a cinq cent hommes, en Muſique.*

pray remember that they were very well in tune; which is the more remarkable, conſidering their vivacity, quarrels, little acquaintance with each other, inexperience, and the uſual jealouſy of rival ſchools. Obſerve, likewiſe, that ſuch an Orcheſtra as this, independent of its Muſical merit, is very intereſting, and that the charms of ſex is equal to the moſt powerful effects.

This is all, my dear friend, that my memory can furniſh at preſent, in anſwer to your queſtions; but as I am far from thoſe ſcenes of action, and as you have not allowed me time to procure better information, by letter, I will not anſwer for the preciſion of my narrative.

Notez, qu'elles allerent fort bien d'accord, ce qui eſt encore plus rémarquable, vû leur vivacité, leur inexpérience de ſe trouver enſemble, et les petites tracaſſeries qui tiennent à leur état, et à la jalouſie réciproque des endroits d'où elles ſortoient. Avouez de même, qu'un Orcheſtre pareil, independamment de ſon mérite Muſical, eſt très intéreſſant, et que ce même mérite ainſi placé, a tout le droit au plus grands effets.

Voilà, Monſieur et très cher ami, ce que ma mémoire m'a fourni ſur le champ, pour pouvoir répondre immediatement à vos queſtions. Mais comme je ſuis loin des lieux, et que vous n'avez pas voulu me donner le tems de me faire écrire ces choſes plus en détail, je ne réponds pas de la derniere exactitude dans les circonſtances que j'ai rapportées.

I ſeize, however, with the greateſt eagerneſs this opportunity of teſtifying my regard, and of aſſuring you that

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your moſt humble and moſt obedient

Servant and Friend,

LE COMTE BENINCASA.

J'ai ſaiſi avec le plus grand plaiſir l'occaſion de vous témoigner, quoique ſi imparfaitement, ma conſideration pour vôtre mérite perſonnel, mon eſtime pour la juſteſſe et l'etendue de vos lumieres, et, permettez-moi de dire auſſi, ma reconnoiſſance pour vôtre zele éclairé, qui a repandu tant de jour et de philoſophie ſur l'hiſtoire de la Muſique, de cette ſource intariſſable de plaiſir, et de ſentiment, que la Divinité bienfaiſante a ouverte aux mortels.

J'ai l'honneur d'être, Monſieur,

Votre très-humble et très-obeiſſant

Serviteur, et Ami,

LE COMTE BENINCASA.

STATE of MONEY received, in conſequence of the Five Commemoration Muſical Performances.

	£.	s.	
Received the firſt day, at Weſtminſter-Abbey, Wedneſday, May 26, 1784 -	2966	5	0
Second Performance, in the Pantheon, Thurſday, May 27 - -	1690	10	0
Third Performance, in the Abbey, Saturday, May 29 - -	2626	1	0
Fourth Performance—Thurſday, June 3 -	1603	7	0
Fifth Performance—Saturday, June 5 -	2117	17	0
At three ſeveral Rehearſals, in Weſtminſter-Abbey and Pantheon - -	944	17	10
His Majeſty's moſt gracious donation -	525	0	0
By ſale of printed books of the words -	262	15	0
Whole Receipts - - - - -	£. 12736	12	10

Diſ-

Diſburſement of SUMS expended, and appropriated to Charitable Purpoſes.

	£.	s.	d.
To Mr. James Wyatt, for building, in the Abbey and the Pantheon - -	1969	12	0
Mr. Aſhley for payment of the band, &c. -	1976	17	0
Rent and illumination of the Pantheon -	156	16	0
Advertiſing in Town and Country Papers -	236	19	0
Printing books of the words - -	289	2	0
Door-keepers - - - -	102	1	6
Uſe of the organ - - - -	100	0	0
High, and petty conſtables - - -	100	5	0
Gratifications - - - -	167	5	0
Engraving cheques and tickets, ſtriking medals, drawings, guards, porters, and ſundry incidents - - - -	351	8	10
To the Society for decayed Muſicians -	6000	0	0
To the Weſtminſter Hoſpital - -	1000	0	0
In the hands of Redmond Simpſon, Subtreaſurer, to anſwer ſubſequent demands	286	6	6
Whole Diſburſement, errors excepted	£. 12736	12	10

REDMOND SIMPSON *(a)*.

(a) Sir Watkin Williams Wynn, who involved and embarraſſed himſelf with the troubleſome and complicated office of *Treaſurer*, undertaking, *ex Officio*, to receive and diſburſe ſums of money ſufficient to have employed the clerks of a conſiderable banker's-ſhop, had great aſſiſtance from the zeal, diligence, and arithmetic-dexterity of Mr. Simpſon, a veteran profeſſor, no leſs diſtinguiſhed for his abilities and probity, than active in all that tends to the proſperity of the Fund, and honour of his profeſſion.

APPEN-

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

THE ſums raiſed in ſo ſhort a ſpace of time by the productions of one Compoſer only, ſo long after his deceaſe, and that of almoſt all his perſonal friends and acquaintance, whoſe partiality could be ſuppoſed to operate on the occaſion, may be numbered among the *miraculous powers* of modern Muſic.

And as the great ſhare of the profits ariſing from the Commemoration-performances which have been beſtowed on the FUND *for the Support of Decayed Muſicians and their Families*, may excite curioſity concerning the nature, extent, and utility, of that inſtitution, and its claim to ſo conſiderable a bounty, I ſhall here give an extract from the original ſtatutes of the Society, followed by a few reflections on its ſubſequent proſperity and uſe.

ABSTRACT of the LAWS and RESOLUTIONS of the FUND *for the Support of Decayed Muſicians and their Families.*

May 8, 1738.

" WHEREAS a Subſcription was ſet on foot the beginning of the laſt month, for eſtabliſhing a FUND *for the Support of Decayed Muſicians, or their Families*; which Subſcription having already met with uncommon ſucceſs, the Subſcribers have had two General Meetings, in order to form themſelves into a regular

Society, by the name of THE SOCIETY OF MUSICIANS, and have elected Twelve Governors for the preſent year; and alſo agreed to the following reſolutions.

I. "That every ſubſcriber to this Charity do pay, at leaſt, Half a Crown a Quarter; the firſt payment to be made on or before Midſummer-day next *(a)*.

II. "That there be annually, on the Sunday before Midſummer-day, a general meeting of the ſaid Subſcribers, to inſpect the accounts, and to elect Twelve Governors by ballot; and that the ſaid Governors, or any five of them, ſhall have power of receiving all monies collected for this charity, paying the ſame as ſoon as poſſible into the hands of Mr. *Andrew Drummond*, banker, upon account, and for the uſe of this SOCIETY; there to remain until it ariſe to a ſum capable of being put out at intereſt in ſome fund ſecured by parliament.

III. "That the ſaid Governors, or any five of them, ſhall have power of drawing upon Mr. *Andrew Drummond*, for ſuch ſums as ſhall be wanted for the uſe of this Charity, and (under ſuch reſtrictions as ſhall be judged neceſſary by the SOCIETY) to diſpoſe of the ſame, keeping an exact account, ready to be produced to any Subſcriber when deſired.

IV. "That no perſon, or his family, ſhall receive any benefit from this FUND, who has not been a profeſſor of Muſic, and alſo a Subſcriber to this Charity, at leaſt one year; and that ſuch perſon ſhall produce a certificate, ſigned by ten Subſcribers, who are not Governors, of his being a proper object, before he ſhall be entitled to any relief from the ſaid FUND.

(*a*) In 1766, the ſum of twenty ſhillings per annum was required of all new-elected members, inſtead of ten. And the old members then agreed, almoſt unanimouſly, to pay the ſame ſum.

V. "That

V. " That no man who has not a family, ſhall receive of this FUND more than Ten Shillings a week, except in caſe of ſickneſs, an allowance for advice and medicines, at the diſcretion of the Governors for the time being.

VI. " That a weekly allowance, not exceeding Seven Shillings, be made to the widows of ſuch Muſicians (who have been Subſcribers to this Fund) as are really found to be in want; but the ſaid allowance *to ceaſe if they marry again*.

VII. " That care ſhall be taken of the children of ſuch Muſicians (who have been Subſcribers to this FUND) as are left deſtitute of other ſupport.

VIII. " That an allowance, not exceeding Five Pounds, be made for the funeral of every ſuch Muſician (who has been a Subſcriber to this FUND) as ſhall die without leaving effects ſufficient to defray the expences of a decent interment, conditionally, that ſuch perſon continued a Subſcriber to this Charity until the time of his death.

IX. " That in order to make a regular diſtribution of this Charity, there be a meeting of the Governors the firſt Sunday in every month, at the Cardigan-head Tavern, near Charing-croſs, or any other place that ſhall be agreed upon by the Governors for the time being; at which meetings the Governors ſhall have a power of admitting ſuch perſons to ſubſcribe to this FUND, as they ſhall judge *not likely* to become ſoon a charge to it; and that no perſon be admitted a Subſcriber, but ſuch as ſhall be approved of by the ſaid Governors, or a majority of them.

X. " That no allowance whatever be made to the Governors for their ſaid Monthly meetings, but that all ſuch meetings be at their own expence.

XI. "That all ſuch Subſcribers as are profeſſors of Muſic, ſhall pay their ſubſcriptions, or cauſe them to be paid, into the hands of the Governors, at ſome of the ſaid Monthly meetings; and that a perſon be appointed (with a ſalary of Five Pounds a a year) *(a)* to collect the ſubſcriptions of thoſe perſons who are not profeſſors of Muſic.

XII. "That if any Subſcriber neglect to pay his ſubſcription for three quarters, he and his family ſhall be for ever excluded any benefit ariſing from this FUND.

XIII. "That the Governors ſhall be obliged to call a General Meeting of the Society, whenever it is required by any Twenty of the Subſcribers.

XIV. "That in caſes not provided for by the aforeſaid Articles, the Governors, for the time being, ſhall have power of acting by ſuch reſolutions of their own making, as from time to time ſhall become neceſſary; but ſhall be obliged to report all ſuch reſolutions to the next General Meeting, in order to have them confirmed *(b)*".

In 1739, a compact was formed with the Corporation of *the Sons of the Clergy*, by which the SOCIETY engaged to furniſh a band, ſelected from their ſubſcribing members, for the two annual performances in St. Paul's Cathedral, in conſideration of the ſum of Fifty pounds, which the Corporation agreed to allow each year to the SOCIETY; and this ſum has been conſtantly thrown into the FUND, and appropriated to charitable purpoſes.

(a) The Collector's ſalary in 1751, was augmented to 25 *l.* per annum.

(b) As the moſt rigid œconomy was abſolutely neceſſary during the infancy of the Society, theſe fundamental laws, however, illiberal and contracted they may at preſent appear, were, perhaps, the beſt which could then be allowed or deviſed; but now the capital of the FUND is become ſo conſiderable, and expectations from future plans ſo promiſing, they certainly require immediate reviſal and extenſion.

Beſides

Beſides the caſual and fluctuating income ariſing from Subſcriptions and Benefits, the SOCIETY has been honoured with a few benefactions in the way of *Legacies*, of which the following is an account.

	£.	s.	d.
In 1758, Mr. *Claudio Rojere*, a profeſſional Subſcriber to the FUND, bequeathed to its uſe the ſum of	100	0	0
1760, Mr. *Boys Waldron*, ditto - -	50	0	0
1782, Mr. *James Mathias*, merchant an honorary Subſcriber *(a)* - - -	50	0	0
But the moſt conſiderable bequeſt which the SOCIETY has ever received from individual benevolence has been from its great benefactor, GEORGE FREDERIC HANDEL, who left to it the ſum of -	1000	0	0

Concerning which Legacy the following account has been procured from the Minutes of the Society.

" *June* 17, 1759.

" Dr. *Buſwell*, late Gentleman of the Chapel-Royal, and one of the committee of the SOCIETY's accounts, reported, that Twelve Hundred and Fifty-four pounds ſtock, of the reduced Bank Annuities, now ſtanding in the names of Mr. *Thomas Wood*, Mr. *Peter Gillier*, and Mr. *Chriſtian Reich*, in the books of the company of the Bank of England, had been transferred to them by *George Amyand*, eſq. one of the exe-

(*a*) This worthy *Dilettante*, who was a conſtant benefactor to the FUND from the time of its inſtitution to his death, excluſive of his annual ſubſcription, as an honorary member, frequently made preſents to the Charity, in money, at the time of the Benefit.

The admirably full, mellow, and extenſive baſe-voice of Mr. James Mathias will be long deplored by his friends, but particularly the members and frequenters of the *Crown and Anchor* Concert, who were ſo long and ſo highly delighted by its effects.

cutors

cutors of the laſt Will and Teſtament of GEORGE FREDERIC HANDEL, eſq. deceaſed, in full ſatisfaction and diſcharge of the Legacy of One Thouſand Pounds, given and bequeathed by the ſaid GEORGE FREDERIC HANDEL, in and by one of the Codicils to his laſt Will, to the SOCIETY, by the name of *The* SOCIETY *for the Support of Decayed Muſicians and their Families*; to be diſpoſed of in the moſt beneficial manner for the ſupport of that Charity."

By theſe donations; by the quarterly contributions of the Members of the SOCIETY during the firſt years of the inſtitution, and afterwards, when double that ſum was requſired, by their annual payments; by honorary Subſcribers; and by Benefits, from June the 17th, 1739, to June the 20th, 1784, excluſive of the Six Thouſand Pounds from the Directors of the COMMEMORATION OF HANDEL, it appears, that in the courſe of forty-five years, the SOCIETY has not only accumulated a ſum ſufficient for the purchaſe of £12,000, in South-ſea Annuities and three *per Cents*, but has paid to their infirm and indigent brethren and their families £24,814 14*s*. ¾.

And it does appear that theſe ſums have been diſtributed in the moſt upright and intelligent manner: allowing to each claiming Member

	£.	*s.*	*d.*
For his ſubſiſtence, per month - -	2	2	0
For a widow - - - -	1	10	4
For each child, the father being dead -	0	10	0
For ſchooling, from five years old to eight, per quarter	0	10	0
From eight to fourteen - - -	0	15	0
For the funeral of a deceaſed penſioner -	5	0	0

The

The SOCIETY, ever ſince its firſt inſtitution, has not only been well ſupported by its principal Members, but by the public in general: for it appears, that the loweſt annual ſum received in the courſe of ſo many years, by Subſcriptions and Benefit, has exceeded £400, except in 1766, when it only amounted to £134; and the higheſt ſum, as in 1782 and 1783, has exceeded £1100.

Of theſe ſums the money annually expended, except the two or three firſt years of the inſtitution, has been from £120, to £866, which was diſburſed in 1769.

	£.	s.	d.	
The SOCIETY's preſent penſioners are ſeven infirm and decayed brethren, at	2	2	0	each,
Twenty-eight widows, at -	1	10	4	per month.
Eleven children, at - -	0	10	0	

Other widows and children at different allowances proportioned to their ſituation and neceſſities; for the whole of which, with an allowance for the ſchooling of children of different ages, the SOCIETY at preſent, is at a certain current expence of - - £. 65 16 8 per month.

Or, - - - 790 0 0 per annum.

At their annual Benefits the principal profeſſional Subſcribers to the Charity, who are not employed in the Orcheſtra, are appointed to attend at the ſeveral doors and offices of the Theatre; the whole buſineſs being tranſacted by themſelves, as regulated and ordered by a *Committee for the* CONCERT. And it ſeems as if no charitable inſtitution could be more out of the reach of abuſe, embezzlement, or partiality; regulated with more care, integrity, and œconomy; or have its income ſo immediately derived from the

the activity and talents of its own Members. Except a ſmall ſalary to the Secretary, and another to the Collector, there is no lucrative employment belonging to the inſtitution: ſo that the whole produce of Benefits and Subſcriptions is nett, and clear of all deduction or drawback.

Mr. *Michael Chriſtian Feſting*, and Doctor *Morrice Green*, took the lead at the time of inſtituting this SOCIETY, and for twelve or fourteen years afterwards. Since their deceaſe, other Muſicians, who were high in the profeſſion, and of whoſe probity and honour their brethren had a good opinion, were placed, alternately, in the chair; and now, by the great acceſſion to the FUND from the profits of the late COMMEMORATION, its capital becomes a ſerious and weighty concern, amounting to upwards of £22,000, in South-Sea annuities and three per Cents, which realizes, and aſcertains, an income of £678 a year, excluſive of Benefit or Subſcriptions.

The path therefore which the Governors and Court of Aſſiſtants have now to purſue is perfectly plain and pleaſant: the power of alleviating diſtreſs and miſery, of feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, and adminiſtering comfort to age and infirmities, is placed in their hands, without the trouble of providing the means.

* * * *

SOME

SOME illiberal reflexions having had admiſſion into the Newſpapers, concerning the ſmall gratuities that were accepted by individuals in the *Commemoration-band*, as compenſations for a fortnight or three weeks labour and attendance, this ſeems the place for clearing them of the charge of meanneſs or rapacity, by an exact ſtatement of their ſituation and ſervices.

Indeed, it is natural for the Benefactors and friends of other Charities to look with an unfavourable eye upon the ſeeming partiality to the MUSICAL FUND, at the excluſion of all other inſtitutions which have charity for their baſis. But a little information concerning the peculiar claims of this SOCIETY, will, perhaps ſatisfy the reaſonable, if not ſilence the clamorous part of the public, who may intereſt themſelves in the diſpoſal of the profits ariſing from an enterprize, wholly generated and foſtered by MUSIC.

And it may be neceſſary to remind ſuch perſons, that the firſt object which occurred to the projectors of this Feſtival, was not the raiſing large ſums of money; but the honour of the Muſical art, and of a great and favourite profeſſor. And happy would they have been, during the firſt dawnings of hope that ſuch an idea could ever be realized, had any one to whom it it was communicated been able to aſſure them, that the plan would *ſupport itſelf*. When profeſſional men, and particularly the Members of the MUSICAL FUND, were found willing to afford it all the ſupport in their power, and there ſeemed a poſſibility that the expences, great as they muſt appear, in every point of view, would not only be defrayed by the performances in contemplation, but that there might, perhaps, be ſome ſurplus to diſpoſe of, nothing could be more natural and reaſonable than for the patrons of this

enterprize to fortify zeal in the performers, by the hope of becoming benefactors to their own well-inſtituted FUND.

But when it is remembered that public curioſity was ſtimulated during the progreſs of the undertaking, in proportion to the ſpontaneous ardor with which Muſicians of all ranks gratuitouſly offered their aſſiſtance, while it was ſuppoſed that the whole celebrity would be compriſed in *two performances* on one and the *ſame day*; that MUSIC was the origin, MUSIC the efficient and final cauſe of the Feſtival; and that the profeſſors of no other ſcience, art, or faculty, however ſuperior in rank or utility, could, perhaps, ſo effectually have influenced the public to ſupport at ſo uncommon an expence, any other ſpecies of exhibition: it can hardly be pronounced unreaſonable that Muſicians ſhould form a wiſh, and their patrons be willing to gratify ſuch a wiſh, that a charitable inſtitution, founded ſolely for the ſupport of their aged, infirm, and indigent brethren, as well as wives, widows, children, and orphans, involved in their diſtreſs, ſhould be chiefly benefited by the ſucceſs of this memorable celebration.

And with reſpect to the ſituation of Muſicians in general, who bore a part in this COMMEMORATION, it may with the utmoſt truth be aſſerted, that no eminent profeſſor could either perform, or attend the performances, without ſacrificing very conſiderably to the honour of HANDEL, and proſperity of the SOCIETY. Even thoſe that were paid received no compenſation that could be deemed at all adequate to the neglect of ſcholars and other concerns, ſo many days, in order to attend public and private rehearſals, as well as the performances themſelves. Indeed, thoſe profeſſors, who paid for admiſſion at all the five public exhibitions,

tions, of whom there were great numbers, ſuſtained the *leaſt* damage. But even to them, five guineas, and the loſs conſequent to four entire days abſence from buſineſs, at ſuch a time of the year, muſt have occaſioned a conſiderable difference in their affairs.

The worthy noblemen and baronets, who honoured the undertaking with their countenance and direction, wiſely and generouſly hung out honourable lures of wands, good cheer, medals, and importance, to thoſe who, without performing, were willing to take an active part in the buſineſs; yet it is but juſtice to ſay, that the honour of HANDEL and benefit of their favourite SOCIETY, ſtimulated their zeal more powerfully than any other conſiderations. And the total diſintereſtedneſs and humanity with which the heads of the Muſical profeſſion have acted for the welfare of this inſtitution, their ſolicitude, and their pride, ever ſince its firſt eſtabliſhment, is the more honourable, as, beſides their quarterly contributions, attendance at general and monthly Meetings as Governors, and ſpending their own money at them all; the performing gratis at the annual benefit for the Charity, as well as thoſe of the Sons of the Clergy, for the profit of the SOCIETY, are ſacrifices which no other profeſſional men can boaſt, merely for the maintenance and ſupport of their infirm and unfortunate brethren and their families: as, by this means, they transfer the weight of providing for their neceſſities, from the ſhoulders of the public, to their own.

St. Martin's-ſtreet,
July 1784.

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ERRATA.

PREFACE, Page xiii. *dele* line 2. *and insert* as if it had been produced by a few select performers, in &c.

LIFE OF HANDEL, P. 13. l. 5. from the bottom, *dele* was. P. 24, Note *(a)*. l. 4. *read* Belchier. Ibid. Note *(b)*, *read* Sheridan. P. 28. l. 12, *dele* that. P. 38. l. 22, *for* were, *read* had. P. 46. *for* 2 vols. *read* a volume. P. 52. l. 10, *for* qui, *read* que.

COMMEMORATION. *Introduction*. P. 11. l. 18, *read* Dupuis. P. 12. Note *(a)* and elsewhere, *read* Ashley. P. 36. l. 13. *dele* s *in the word* simples. P. 40, *dele the catchword* Indeed, *and insert* Nothing.

DIRECTIONS to the BINDER for placing the CANCELS.

Signature *B to be placed between B and C.
D 2 (a Sheet) and *D (a Quarter-Sheet) to be placed in Sheet D, instead of Pages 19, 20, 21, and 22.
F p. 39 and 40 (last Leaf) to be cancelled, and Sheet G follows immediately.
I a Quarter Sheet follows H.
Last Leaf of *E* and first of *F*, cancelled; to be replaced by the Half-Sheet marked **E* and *F*.

See Directions for placing the PLATES, First Sheet, p. viii.